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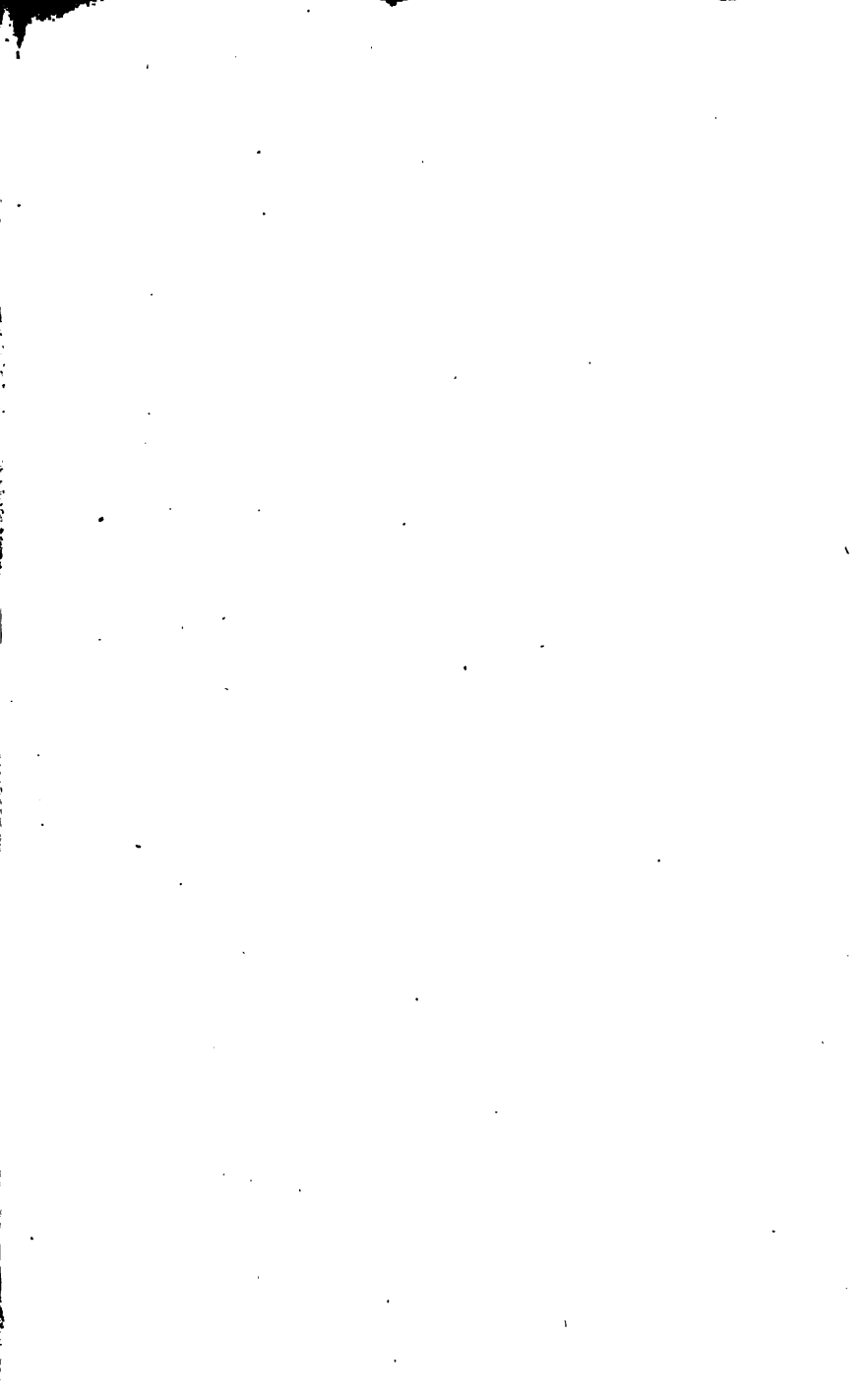
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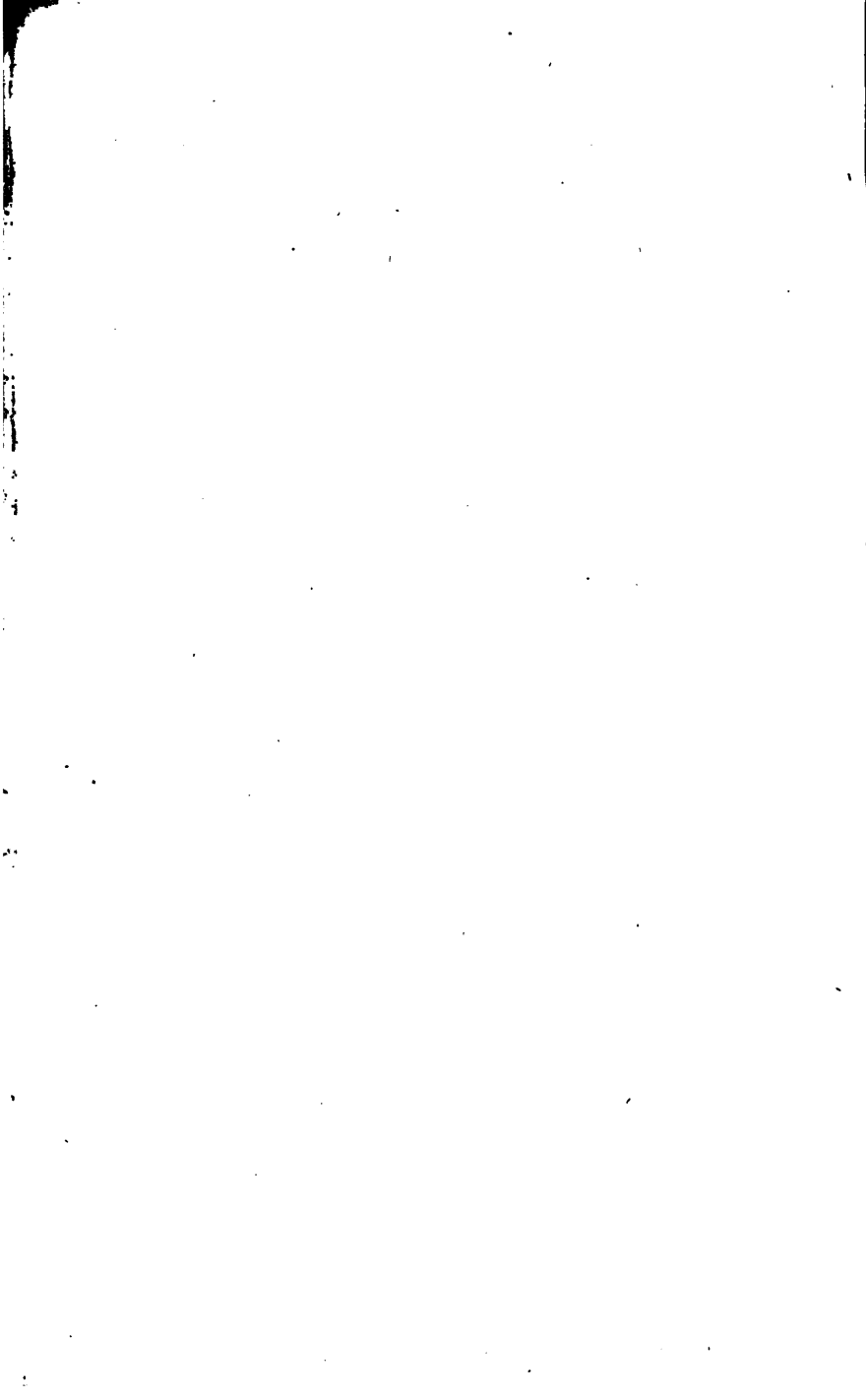
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TO - DAY IN IRELAND.

VOL. II.

THE CARDERS.

CONNEMARA.



TO-DAY IN IRELAND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE CARDERS.

CONNEMARA.

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THE CARDERS.

CHAPTER XV.

TIMOTHY Oulaghan and O'Rourke had both been privy to Murtagh's design of taking vengeance on the unfortunate informer, Blaney: the plan, indeed, had been arranged between the worthies on the previous evening. They prided themselves not a little on the novel and secure way of executing the deed of vengeance, in the very midst of an assembled crowd; where the presence of almost the whole country would baffle any particular suspicion, and render the punishment they meditated more awful and exemplary. They little dreamed that any possible circumstance could lead to the apprehen-

sion of Murtagh, or the involving of the Dillon family in the consequences. Tidings, however, of the event and its consequences soon reached them; and their disappointment and rage, on learning the bad effects of their scheme, were proportionate to the want of foresight with which they had planned it.

O'Rourke, especially, breathed vengeance. The schoolmaster had an affection for the young student; in producing whose independent or rebellious propensities he thought he had been instrumental; and innocent as he knew the Dillons to be of all complicity in the act of blood committed by their servant, still he well knew the uncertainty and frequent injustice with which the law was administered in a county so agitated by party, and feared the verdict of an Orange jury, even with nothing beyond circumstantial evidence to guide them. Timothy, the landlord, saw his danger, and was for instant flight; but O'Rourke over-talked his immediate apprehensions, and argued that flight would be as practicable and as safe twelve hours later; in

which time there might be something done worth enduring banishment for.

The evening waxed already late. It was an established rule of the Carder system, that no attack, outrage, or act of violence should be committed by the inhabitants of the district; but that the perpetrators should be summoned from as great a distance, as the time appointed for the execution of the deed allowed of. Accordingly the proper emissaries were despatched, some over hill and bog to a far barony, another in a bark over the lake, to collect a band of daring spirits for a most important enterprise.

However, the arrest of the Dillons became soon known all over the country; and as, in consequence, such an attempt as that now prepared by the schoolmaster was foreseen, and occurred equally to all as feasible and commendable, the young peasantry of the neighbourhood flocked in numbers to the rendezvous, and would not be denied the honour of sharing in the attack and the rescue.

By the hour of midnight, the messengers had

returned, each accompanied by a strong party ; and these, joined with the volunteers that had flocked in from the neighbouring villages and hamlets, formed a very numerous body. Arms and ammunition, objects of far more difficult supply than men, were, owing to the school-master's late visit to and return from the metropolis, in abundance, and had but a few days since crossed the waters of the lake, concealed in the bottom of a potatoe-barge. These were distributed in proper hands ; but the dominie captain was too familiar with Titus Livius to permit his army to march without exhorting them in an appropriate speech,—so, elevating himself on a convenient chair or stool, their leader addressed them in the following classic terms :—

“ Here we are, my roaring boys, met to do a thing worthy of us at last. The Tipperary lads call us back-scratchers,—let us show 'em now if we fear to smell gunpowder and face bayonets, when there's rason. The bloody informer that betrayed us lies low, as ye've seen ; but the boy that did the blessed deed, is

likely to swing for it, unless ye can help it. And the Dillons, the finest ould Roman family of the country, are threatened to be cut off—seed, breed, and generation, by the Orangers, only caase the villain was shot in their bawn. Then, now's the time, boys;—devil a use in prating longer or paradin', spending good whiskey in drinkin' to the success of the cause in the year of, St. Patrick knows when; instead of spiriting oursels at once to the rising, and drinkin' the crater ever after free of th' exciseman. So nuver let's say it twicet, boys; but be the first to light the blessed torch of liberty once more in the Green Isle! What say ye all to my proposial?"

A ready shout evinced the willingness of his audience to second the speaker.

"That's your sort, my hearties! drain the last drop in the place, and let us march to business."

Thus inspirited with whiskey and a speech, the gang marched forward to attack, as the curate had foreseen, the house of Plunketstown. O'Rourke, in order to prevent the too speedy

interference of the detachment stationed at Rathfinnan, despatched some three or four of the feeblest of his body to alarm the upper and farther part of the village, especially the house of a better sort of farmer situated thereabouts. He ordered them not to stir, unless they should hear the report of fire-arms in the direction of Plunketstown; and, as soon as they did, to fire as many rounds as they had, in a feigned attack on the farmer's habitation, thereby to endeavour to distract the soldiery, and cause a diversion of their small force.

The main body, led on by O'Rourke, marched from behind Plunketstown-hill, where they had collected, through the grove, in order to approach the rear of the mansion, on which side it was deemed most prudent to make the attack. The night, as before observed, did honour to November, and was so black, that even the thick wood traversed by the Carders could not shed a darker shade upon it. So obscure was it, that the party were with difficulty able to keep the path; and, afraid as yet to unveil the lanterns with which they were provided,

they erred frequently among the brakes and underwood, and made havoc amongst the rotten boughs they came in contact with, setting the dogs of many a cottage baying. The wind, however, was from the lake; and the dogs of the mansion itself were not aroused, till the poor animals felt the death-blow that silenced them for ever.

The barriers of both inner and outer yards were easily overcome, even without exciting alarm. O'Rourke himself knew the mansion well, being accustomed of old to pay a daily visit thither, for the purpose of instructing Miss Lucy in the abstruse parts of arithmetic, that were deemed necessary for her education, yet, at the same time, were above the accomplishments of her governess. Guided by the school-master's local knowledge, some of his party introduced themselves into the scullery by a lattice-window, which was removed without noise or difficulty, and the door thereof speedily opened. The kitchen-door itself was thus come at, to get through which silently could not be expected; it was the object of the gang, how-

ever, to make all the progress possible without open alarm; and, as one of the house breakers observed, that "maybe a little bit of fire would make the doore tinderer," a light was applied to it; but their impatience was too great to await its slow effects, and a speedier mode of cleaving through the obstacle was adopted. Four men were ranged in front of it: one lusty fellow with a sledge, two with hatchets, whilst another, with a crow-bar, awaited the first symptoms of chink or crevice to get a prize, as he called it, with his instrument, and force the door. Their armed comrades were arranged behind, ready to rush on as soon as the breach was declared practicable. The weapons of violence were up-raised at a signal, and went down together upon the shattering door; sending at once warning and alarm through the house, startling Lucy and our hero from their tender colloquy, and rousing squire, Peeler, and policeman from their ill-advised security and slumber.

Mr. Plunket leaped up instantly; his first act was to throw open his bed-room window, and fire the shot of alarm that had been agreed on.

He was not a little startled to find his signal answered by numerous reports of fire-arms in the direction of Rathfinnan. Surely, thought he, they have not had the boldness to attack the guard at the same time—that, indeed, were an act of generalship that might cost us dear. Hurrying out, he found the policemen descending, calling, chiding, and exciting each other in hurried accents, that were scarcely heard for the fearful plying of sledge and hatchet. Roderick was also descending; but his brother stopped him, begging of him to guard against any attempt from the outside to break into the upper part of the house; for, although able to move about, he could still be of little use in a personal struggle. To describe all this, requires longer time than did the acting of it; the opposing door was demolished in a few seconds, and the Carders rushed in with oaths and fury. They were greeted, however, on their first appearance, by such a discharge, that, with their usual cowardice on such occasions, the villains instantly turned, and fell back upon their comrades. But O'Rourke, who knew the men he had to lead on,

was prepared for this; and his knowledge of their little steadiness on a first onset, had led him to choose the point of attack which he had chosen, instead of the broad windows, and more easily-forced passages, by which he might have attempted to enter. Their leader, admitting the better part of the gang into the scullery, had secured the door of it, and himself prevented the escape of the fugitives by the window. There was nothing left for them but fighting; and when the Peelers and policemen, who thought themselves already victorious, advanced to kill or secure any lingering straggler, they were met by another charge that drove them, in its first impetus, through the kitchen, and even far up the staircases. Up these they still fought their way; the Peelers retreating before them, knowing that, however they might keep them down by firing, they could never oppose such numbers successfully in a close struggle. In this manner the Carders had gained the first landing of the stairs; they had lost several of their numbers, either wounded or worse, in the attack, having themselves little opportunity to fire, whilst they

received all the shot of their adversaries. At the head of the staircase, however, the defenders of the house made a desperate stand;—they had quite the command of all that ventured up from below—they themselves not being at all exposed. A momentary cessation of firing and attack having taken place at this moment, O'Rourke called a parley with the captain, as he styled Mr. Plunket.

“What have you to say, you scoundrel?” was the reply.

“In troth, then, the divil a harm we wish you, captain, dear. We'll go quitely home about our business, if ye'll give up the prisoners—we won't spake about the arms—but send down Murtagh there, and Maister Dillon, that ye're persecuting, and we'll be quit wi' you; only ye might be after givin' us in a crapper for our trouble.”

“Your trouble, you ruffian! I wonder if ever man heard impudence like this?”

“Never be minding our impudence, my ould cock! Ye're crowing there lustily on your dung-hill,—a good rason you have, and stout chap ye

may be, but you 'll not come the dragoon over us;—so out wid the prisoners, or look to your house, if it don't crackle about your lugs. By Gimini ! if we can't catch the rats, we 'll singe 'em. Have you the straw and the powther ready, boys ? Once more I bid you think of yoursel, Master, and o' the fine ould mansion, and o' the lass. If you don't spake the word, the divil a one of yees will live to see the sun, or cry God save you, neighbour !”

“ Fire on, you rebel rascals ! you 'll not have a single plank ablaze before the soldiers are here. You may ask them for a cropper for your trouble.”

“ Musha ! then good luck to you, if it's the souldiers you 're looking after :—enough the lobsters have to keep their own claws busy. If ye was only to look out, and see what a beautiful bonfire Rathfinnan makes the blessed midnight, —guardhouse, barracks, village, and all, ye 'd see what hopes ye have of the red-coats. Once more I warn you,—give up Murtagh and the Dillons.”

During this dialogue, which resounded through

the house, and to which the noise of fire-arms had given way, the sufferings of the women and the anxiety of the prisoners are more easily imagined than described. Whilst Honoria, with palpitating heart, was alive to the dreadful scene that was passing, Lucy was in a state almost insensible; and Aunt Bec, as much overlooked in this narrative as she was in Plunketstown mansion, was near slipping out of the world as silently as she had passed through it. Murtagh, in the mean time, was busied preparing some way of escape; and Arthur thundered at the secured door of his apartment; prayed earnestly to be liberated, that he might join in the defence, or, at least, be allowed to address the insurgents. Roderick at length lent ear to his clamorous supplications, and unbarred the door. Arthur at once sprang upon the lobby, and cried out to those below that so violently demanded his liberation—

“Is it for the purpose of rescuing me and my father, lads, that you have come hither?”

A shout of joy was meant to welcome his voice, and answer in the affirmative.

"Then I can tell you, ye have taken the best possible way to get us hanged. And, moreover, were I sure of avoiding that death by going down to you, I would not do it, but fire with my own hand on the first that ventures up."

"Never heed him," said a voice below; "isn't he among the Cromwell's sons o' Malekites, and sure they make him spake what they will?"

"Ouh aye," says another, "by gob, I tould ye, from the first time I laid eyes on him in Ardross, that he was a snake, and ud turn black sheep one day or another."

"D'ye hear that, Mister Arthur Dillon?" said another, not in the assumed tone that the ruffians generally assumed, passion or agitation of some kind betraying him into his natural voice, "d'ye hear that? Come down, and prove yourself what you ought to be, or be stuck for ever on the black list of renegades and informers. Will you turn against the friends that peril life for you?"

"Ah! ha! Mr. O'Rourke," cried Mr. Plunket, recognizing the voice, "is it to you we are indebted for this visit? Upon my word, I thought

you more learnedly given than to be a captain of these hell-hounds."

As the only answer to this unwelcome discovery and apostrophe, O'Rourke broke short the truce, as it seemed to have been, and rushing up the stairs far enough to get in front of the defenders of the house, levelled his piece deliberately at Mr. Plunket, while the musquets of every one opposed were in turn directed at him. O'Rourke, however, was the quicker, his sudden resolution anticipating their surprise. He fired with fatal effect, shooting the unfortunate master of the mansion through the head, and himself carrying with him more than one wound as he rapidly retreated, but none immediately mortal, or fatal enough to stop him. As he faltered however on arriving below, his followers took panic at their leader's being disabled, and fled, in right good time as it happened; the Major arriving almost at the moment with the military, and beginning to force an entry into the front of the house. Some of the Peelers from above pursued the flying Carders, whilst others facilitated the entrance

of Hempenshaugh, who arrived but just in time to witness the last sigh heaved by the generous and unfortunate Plunket.

He fell in the arms of his brother Roderick and Arthur, but he was past all human help or support, and was borne in a minute after to his couch a lifeless corpse. Poor Lucy even was not thought of in the shock and hurry; but from the dread silence succeeding to the thick report of fire-arms, she guessed some fatal death-blow had been dealt, and rushed instantly out to ascertain. She found her father stretched upon his bed, his forehead streaming with blood, his face yet warm, though stiffened in the languid agony of a violent death. Happy the female that can swoon into insensibility at sights like this! a waking, during, unbedimmed consciousness of such horrors would be beyond the possibility of suffering. Lucy fell by the side of her parent; Arthur himself, amongst others, helping to support the fainting daughter, as he had just supported the dying father. All this was the fatal effect of his own imprudence and misfortune;—"yet not imprudence," thought he, "I am a

blind victim, as well as a blind bringer of victims. I am marked, accursed! — evil fate falls thick on me, and every one connected with me! Ah, Lucy! thy misgivings were but too just, thy superstition true—ill luck attends equally myself, my loves, and friendships. And the tradition of our house still holds, that foretells for its sons either the highest pitch of greatness, or the lowest of misfortune.”

Such were the melancholy thoughts that filled the mind of Arthur; that of Major Hempen-shaugh was otherwise occupied. Accustomed to such scenes in a country where they were frequent, he was out of his place in the chamber of mourning, and thought a scene of the kind of no use whatever to the great business of life, which he deemed Carder-catching and traitor-hanging. Vengeance was his province; now, indeed, all that was left to any one; but before his proceeding on this quest, the prisoners required his consideration. On this point he was arguing with one of his constabulary officers, in the midst of Lucy's sobs, and the absorbed despair of the family of Plunketstown, which, even

the domestics, was now collected round the body of their late master.

“What if the ruffians should return?” said the Major.

“Return!” cried Arthur, utterly forgetting, in the horrors of the moment, that he was even a prisoner; “have not the murderers done their deed? what more could they possibly inflict on all of us?”

“Upon my troth! young master prisoner,” replied the Major, “you turn these events about strangely to your own advantage, as if your being here was not the very aim and occasion of this attack and its consequences.”

“Oh! true, true, Sir, I am your prisoner—I forget;—but do not, I beg of you, separate me yet awhile from all the sorrow that I have occasioned.”

“Look to him, Toole,” said the Major, “for all his speaking. I must see how Mister Steward has bided his prison above-stairs all this time.”

Major Hempenshaugh mounted, according as he said, to the upper room, in which Murtagh

had been confined. The door at least was safe; but on unlocking it, no prisoner could be found. The bird had flown.—“ Flown, truly,” said the Major, and he looked out of the open lattice, and by the morning break already glimmering discovered the mode of the murderer’s escape. The room was the very attic of a high house; but by the well-known aid of slit sheets and blankets, Murtagh had contrived to let himself half-way down: the rest of the descent he must have leaped or fallen. “ Dead he must be below, for a surety,” said the Major, “ after such a fall;” but in the still obscure twilight he could discover nothing on the grass, or in the moat below, to corroborate his conjecture. On further search, no signs of Murtagh were discovered: the torn and dented grass bore witness where a heavy weight had fallen, and marks of the same weight having been rolled or dragged to a considerable distance still remained in a line upon the lawn, from which the moisture, half dew, half frost, of the night had been swept.

“ Gone, by Heaven!” said the Major, who felt this blow more than even the loss of his

friend ; “ was there ever such a series of disasters ? ”

The enraged magistrate descended, resolved at least to secure the remaining prisoners ; and entered once more the chamber of sorrow, where he found Lucy recovered to waking grief, and giving way to fearful lamentations. In vain Arthur, as well as her uncle, endeavoured to calm her, or to attract her attention to any other object ; she would heed nothing but the remains of her parent, and even turned from Arthur with especial horror, as if she recognized him in her frenzy as the cause of her irreparable loss. She seemed to wish waving all contemplation, as well as thoughts of him ; but his importunate anxiety and affection still held him by her side, and his perseverance at length aroused indignation.

“ Away, Sir ! quit my sight ! ” cried the distracted girl ; “ you may be innocent, you may be good and generous-hearted, but unlucky was the day that I and my poor father saw thee. Go, Arthur Dillon, go—I would not be severe, rude I should say, towards you—but your tears

are useless,—ah ! they will not raise the dead ;—go—there is my hand, Sir, and let us never meet again.”

The agitated maiden felt soothed by this act of sacrifice, as she felt it, due to the memory of her parent ; and the flood of tears that followed might, without injustice to the sincerity and fullness of her filial affection, be traced to the mingled sorrows and passions of her breast. To so unexpected an apostrophe, Arthur felt quite unable to reply ; but at once obeying its command, he silently quitted his position by the couch-side, and resigned himself to the constable to be reconducted to his prison. Lucy looked a moment after him, but felt ashamed to show that her thoughts, at such a time, were occupied by aught but her unfortunate parent.

Day in the mean time strode on, and with it brought back Mr. Crostwhaite and Lord Castle-town Belville to Plunketstown. They came attended by all the disposable force of his lordship's garrison, which, in addition to the Peelers and the Rathfinnan detachment, might defy any attempt of the Carders. The amazement

and horror of the magistrates on entering the mansion and learning what had happened, may be supposed. They were both truly touched by the fate of their acquaintance or friend, and were not professional enough to share in the apathy of Major Hempenshaugh. When they thought, too, of the character of Plunket—the mild, the moderate, the benevolent magistrate, and compared it with their own activity against the insurgents, and odium with them, they could not help reflecting, what is always observed in Irish troubles with truth, that it is on the mild and pacific that vengeance is wreaked for the oppressive acts of the cruel and the violent.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Dillons, father and son, were that day conducted under a strong escort to the county gaol of Mullingar, and there resigned to the safe keeping of the prison, until the next assizes, or a special commission appointed for the purpose, should decide upon their fate. The curate and Lord Castletown Belville superintended their secure conveyance thither; whilst the baffled Hempenshaugh, with every nerve and thought strained for the apprehension of the murderers, remained behind in order to pursue them, or discover the place of their retreat. For several days, however, all the rewards offered, and emissaries despatched, returned from a vain quest; the magistrates were left without a single clue of discovery,

since the fate of Blaney had struck terror into the few peasants that were either inclined or sold to the loyalists. In vain the major boated here, patrolled there, searched ancient ruins, and modern cabins all as ruined ; he met every where with the same ill success, the same answers, and countenances of stolid astonishment.

Lucy in the mean time removed from the mansion of noisy sorrow, if, indeed, the obstreperous mirth with which the lower Irish celebrate the dissolution of their friends, or masters, can be denominated sorrow. Lady Castletown Belville had pressed the young lady and her aunt to make the Castle their temporary retreat ; but the society of Honoria was a consolation that Lucy could not separate from, and she preferred retiring to the little isle and cottage of Mr. Travers, at Inchfearris ; leaving Plunketstown to its present possessor, Mr. Roderick Plunket.

In the tranquillity of this isolated spot, the natural current of her feelings, frozen up as it had been by the violent fate of her parent, the sight of blood, and the presence of death, again

recovered its flow; and fears for her lover began to mingle with, and to assuage the poignancy of filial grief. Sincerely had she loved, and deeply did she regret, her lost parent; but the impulses and affections of the heart are headlong, forward,—and the sundering of the ties that Nature has formed for us produces a grief far less daring and acute, than the snapping of those which the heart has been instrumental in forming for itself.

Consolation in another shape visited the prowling and disappointed Hempenshaugh; in other words, some light as to the lurking-place of the fugitives beamed on him. A fresh cart-track had been observed on the morning of the attack indented over the nearest field-path to the lake, which had turned suspicion lakewards, until the bodies of two of the unfortunate men that had fallen in the contest, were discovered half-buried in the bog—that lay in a direction from Plunketstown remote from the water. From the marks of struggle evident in the bodies, and on the soft pit in which they had been immersed, it was but too evident, shocking to

relate, that, though dangerously wounded, they had not been quite dead when thus buried alive by their companions, to seal up for ever the tongues and secrets that remorse might have let loose. Long unowned, they were at last found to be inhabitants of a distant part of the country. This discovery perplexed and misled the Major ; until, after some time, sure tidings were conveyed to him that the cart-track was the right scent ; and that Murtagh Fallon, whose back had been broken by his fall from Plunketstown attic, and who, after rolling himself a considerable space, was picked up by his comrades, had been, with the also disabled O'Rourke, conveyed in a kish to the brink of the lake, and thence transported either to one of its islands, or to the opposite shore.

Fraught with this intelligence, and knowing his Peelers to be of little use as mariners or rowers, the Major pressed into his service his Majesty's six-oared revenue-barge, with the stout crew, accustomed to similar expeditions, alluring them by the reward proffered for the apprehension of the two assassins ; and thus

equipped, he put forth to scour every isle, cavern, and lurking-place, in or about Lough Ree.

It was a squally November day, such as are common in that month, with neither cloud nor sky over-head, but a dun uniform heaven, that seemed a compromise between both, spread above, clear, though the blue appeared not; for the bitter blast dissipated and chased before it every lingering speck of vapour that could gather into a cloud. Over the lake, too, it swept as sharp and uninterrupted as on high, unless when it encountered the lurking isle or jutting head-land that called forth its wrath, and over which it caused the waters to rage in foam. A tempest on one of these lakes, however inland, is far from being despicable;—I have seen stout timbers creak, and canvass fritter into rags, under the influence of its storms;—distress and wreck are not strangers to its narrow sea;—and a life may be perilled on its fresh waters as imminently as on the salt. Perhaps one, indeed, is more struck with the lake-storm, than with that of the wide ocean itself, deprived of all

the accessories of land participating in the fury of the hurricane ; and there is, perhaps, less of the terrific and sublime in the tempest with all the ocean to itself, than when we can behold it not only stirring the waters, but agitating also the whole earth's surface, with all its productions, from the swaying oak to the solitary blade of grass that quivers on the ruin:—

“ And when the fitful winds do sigh,
Wafting the plover's lonely cry,—
And when the storm sweeps loud and strong,
Hymning aloft his thunder-song,—
When in its might the black lough roars,
Chafing within its narrow shores,
And writhing fierce, with madd'ning shock,
Gnasheth his white teeth on the rock.”

It is to be doubted, if Byron's sketch of an ocean-storm be much more sublime than these few touches of a lake-one by Limrick, in his “ Ourawns.”

All the inconvenience of the storm, however, and little of its sublimity, was felt by Major Hempenshaugh and his crew. The murderers, hidden in the sacred ruins of the Nun's Island,

listened to its howlings with more superstitious dread. They were for the present the only tenants of the old vaulted building, that once had been a church; into the half-buried portal of which it behoved him that would enter, to do so on hands and knees. At its threshold now was our old friend Sib, holding in through the aperture a smoking dish, or skib, as she called it, of potatoes, but no one from within, according to her expectation, seemed coming to take it from her hand.

"Maybe the victuals isn't worth your stirrin' for, ye lazy pair o' nat'ral's."

"We cannot see a stim, nor stir a peg, mistress," was the reply from within.

"Ouh! who's to be sweeling tallow in a wind that's enough to blow the eyes back in one's head? Yees may ate and live in the dark;—ye've done other deeds in it afore," cried Sib, holding in the potatoes, as benevolent in heart and act as she appeared malevolent in word.

"Curse the hag!"

"Ah! captain honey, what for ye be cursin'

in sich a holy place the poor body that's feedin' you. Spake fair, when the wind's high. But whisht wid your grummelling, where naughting but prayer should be hard, and I'll do my endeavour to bring a rishlight in my praskeen."

And the old dame set off to bring a light, not so much from commiseration to the wretches, as to prevent their swearing or otherwise profaning the holiest place, the very *sanctorium* of the island, and thereby entailing misfortune on its inhabitants. With much difficulty, and after many failures, Sib brought the rushlight safe to the buried portal; beneath which she crept with it, soon mingling its puny ray with the damp and thick darkness of the cavern chapel. A cavern, indeed, it must still have been in its best of days, as, notwithstanding the wonderful workmanship of its roof and portal, it was without window or other aperture for light. In one corner of it now lay Murtagh, foreshortened, unfortunate wretch, by the consequence of his fall: his broken back had already communicated to his features the dragged and haggard expression that always accom-

panies it, and which in him might have been mistaken for a consciousness of crime, and a remorse that his heart belied. Opposite to him lay O'Rourke extended; the damp air of the cavern evaporating in moisture on his fevered brow, and with features, where the rage of anger and disappointment still struggled with the undermining faintness of disease. The eternal good humour and unvarying spirits of O'Rourke had given way under weakness and torture, and the horror of spending many days and nights in darkness and discomfort. A fire might have been lighted in the chapel, but the islanders would not hear of the profanation; and, moreover, smoke, "the wickedest informer," they said, "that ever whispered exciseman," if seen to issue unusually from the island, would be most apt to prove a tell-tale. Reasons for this caution were evident in the quantity of barrels, kegs, and other vessels for liquor, that tenanted the chapel; for although fire might profane a sacred place, "sorrow a saint in paradise could have the last objection in life to whiskey."

“Whisht wid your cursing and grummeling there,” said Sib, holding her rushlight over the head of the prostrate schoolmaster; “you dusn’t know what misfortin might come of it,—your larnin’ might have tould you that, any how.”

“Get out, ye preachifying hag!” cried O’Rourke, seizing from her hand a noggin of milk that she had just brought with her, and satisfying his parched throat with a draught; “what care the saints or the good people for this whiskey-shop of yours, that ye’re all so tinder of, as if a few sods of lighted turf would have harmed it? Od, if St. Patrick himself were here, he’d have a bit lighted to keep his old teeth from chattering. Mind the light, Sib.” And a gust swept in at the little aperture with an ominous noise, and whirled up to the low-vaulted roof the light straw and rubbish of the chapel-floor.

“Will you mind that, if you wanot mind me, you hardened sinner?” cried Sib, after crossing herself.

"That is an awful storm, in truth," said O'Rourke.

"Isn't it for all the world like the wind swinging a gibbet?" said the rough voice of Murtagh, now dwindled, though it still retained its huskiness, to a treble. "I remember, a month ago, myself riding under the spot where Jim Fox is swinging yet;—how black he looked in his pitch shirt, and the wind hove him back and forward jist like the sign-board anent Tim Oulaghan's door,—rest poor Tim! I hope he's 'scaped farther off nor we;—the iron hinge above Jim Fox's head skrieked in the wind jist as that blast did, and I had the very moral of him hangin' afore me this minute."

"Safe us!" cried Sib, "the man's seen his own winding-sheet, and his fate's not far."

"Out, you pair of fools!" cried O'Rourke, "it's a big storm, and what more can you make of it? We may rest this day contented,—none of the Peeling rascals would venture out on such waves as must be stirring, to find us."

“An that’s true,” said Murtagh; “but when I think of my own dear masters shut up in a black prison this blessed day, I didn’t care if the rascals did come and carry me off to keep ’em company.”

“Dear masters! damn their sneaking souls!” cried O’Rourke.

“Yees will be cursin’,” cried Sib, and another chance gust effectually extinguished the rush-light in her hand.

“Holy Virgin!” cried Sib, making to the aperture, “keep me safe from this man!—Is it for this folks gets larnin’,” muttered she, as she was making her exit, “and swallows whole dixonaries, and the sorrow a good word out of all is in their mouths after!”

With this ejaculation, Sibby made her escape through the portal or aperture of the chapel to light and the open air once more; leaving the unfortunate criminals within to converse, and devour their morning meal in darkness;—and not a little thankful to all her guardian saints for getting clear, she returned to her more comfortable, though less sacred cabin.

Here, however, she had not long turned her attention to her household work, when some of the children ran in, in haste, to let her know "that the guager's bum-boat was bating up the lough."

Upon the word, Sib ran out herself to reconnoitre, and found the children's report to be but too correct. A stranger might have been incredulous of the capability of the child to distinguish and ascertain the exact vessel; but island eyes were sharpened by the necessity of a continual look-out, and there was soon no doubt of the identity of the revenue-barge, when a descending wave displayed its benches, too full and thickly manned to be other than what was at first suspected.

"Oh! wirra, wirra, what will become of us!" cried Sib, "the guager's a-coming, and we wid a whole cargo of potheen in the ould chapel, and two poor devils of Carders to boot—and not a living man on the island to help an ould woman to fight or fly;" and she wrung her hands for a minute in desperation. "Hallo! Thady, Padeen, like good gossoons, come and

help to stow away the kegs—half saved's better nor whole gone;" and still muttering fears, prayers, and commands, Sib arrived breathless at the little portal once more.

"Ah! you unlucky limb of —— his!" cried she to the schoolmaster within, unwilling to utter the name of old Nick, to which her sentence led, "they're comin' for you at last."

"Comin'? who's comin'?" cried both within, in consternation.

"Yees 'll soon be knowing that same," continued she, setting the boys about removing some of the kegs to the outside, and seeming to exult in the speedy apprehension of the unfortunate men, which at the time she was anxiously pondering how best to prevent.

As the children put out the kegs, she hurried with them to a neighbouring part of the shore, where a small and stunted oak-grove extended, even beyond the brink of the lake, for several yards into its waters. There she deposited them, concealed, as she thought, and secured, as they floated, by thick underwood and briars that the rising of the waters had half immersed.

This performed, she once returned to reconnoitre, and could perceive the dreaded barge just running a-shore upon an island not very distant. This gave her a moment's hope that the visit was not for her; but as still she watched, she found reason to resume her fears, for the barge, after waiting a sufficient time to allow of a search, pushed off for another side and harbour of the island, resting there for a similar time and purpose.

“Tisn't still-hunting they are the day,” cried Sib to herself; “it's guaging no liquor, but ould Irish blood, they are, the villians!—and these poor lame White-Boys, what'll become of them? I tould 'em how it would be, but stay they would in the island, as if the Holy St. Bridget, blessed be her name! that lived nun's flesh all her life, ud think o' purtecting every bearded gaby that ull call upon her. What will become of 'em?” continued she, turning again towards their lurking-place; “if poor Jack were here itsel to row off wid 'em—poor fellow! he's gone the way they'll go—and that makes me tinder-hearted for them;—and if they

had half an hour's law on Connaught land, O'Rourke could rin for his life, and that poor broken-bodied Murtagh might hide in a bush, still as a keg, and shy them bloody guagers."

Thus pondering the best for the wretches under her protection, she once more entered the chapel, and found O'Rourke drawn near to the aperture in anxious awaital of further tidings.

"They're a comin' — they're scenting you both. Sorrow a doubt of it," cried Sib.

"How many boys are on the island?" said O'Rourke.

"Sorrow a one!" replied Sib, "not as much manhood here as ud bruise a Peeler's little finger — sorrow a one! — not a man in the Nun's Isle, barrin' mysel', and I'm an ould woman."

"What is to be done?" asked O'Rourke.

"Arrah! what should we?" cried Murtagh, "let's bide out our fate. If it'll come, let it,— sorrow a much worse can we be nor we are, here or in purgatory!"

"Troth, then, that's mighty true," said Sib;

“and if you were both of yees hanged, not a worse place nor purgatory could ye go to. There’s no sin so black, they say, that an Oranger’s or ane informer’s blood wan’t wash out.”

Whatever Murtagh might be, O’Rourke did not seem at all contented with this kind of comfort. He asked Sib, if she thought they might escape discovery in the chapel.

“Musha, then, I don’t think no such thing:—a snug place it is, sure enough, to ’scape talkers, or idle folk, or visitors; but in an out-and-out search, like this of these revenue-lads, it’s the worst place at all; and yon’s the very first hole their heads ull be into, perhaps.”

“Holy —— !” said O’Rourke, raising himself, “if we could even fight for our lives.”

The report of a musquet at the instant started them; and on Sib’s putting forth her head, the noise of shouts and laughter came upon the wind, mingled with the plashing of the dread-ed barge, that was evidently nearing the island.

Sib returned.

“Come,” said she, “it’s ill biding mysel’ the

worrying of these hell-hounds ! So let's all have a rin for it : if ye stay, they 'll surely nab you,— if we rin, yees may escape ; and they 'll let alone the kegs, I warrant, as soon as they see a boat flirting ower the lough."

How far the saving of Sib's kegs predominated in her idea above the *safety* of her *protégés*, I shall not determine. Going over to Murtagh instantly, and taking up the maimed wretch in her brawny arms, she conveyed him to the portal, and pushed him through it, helping O'Rourke to effect the same exit. Having herself emerged, she carried Murtagh to a boat, whither O'Rourke had in the mean time dragged himself ; and all aboard, Sib spread her little sail, though, such was the storm, the revenue-barge itself feared to mount a shred of canvass ; and with one oar playing to keep her boat's head to windward, in order to make St. John's, away they scudded from the Nun's Island.

It so happened, in the mean time, that the old dame's contrivance in securing part of her kegs had the effect of betraying them, and at the

same time of favouring the Carders' escape. The sharp eye of a revenue-officer had descried one of the kegs under shore, and the shot which he had fired from the barge "to broach the potheen," was the report that had alarmed our worthies in the chapel. On this discovery the barge had made for that side of the island, and while its crew were engaged in seizing Sib's floating whiskey, she herself, with Murtagh and O'Rourke, were making swift way to the Connaught shore. At length Major Hempenshaugh descried the fugitive boat, that had not, he knew, put out in such weather without cogent reasons. He speedily called his party off, though with some difficulty, from the professional exertions they were most accustomed to; and with not a few imprecations on kegs and guagers for the delay, that might very possibly permit the escape of his prey, he set forth in pursuit of the island bark.

"Put up a gib," cried the anxious Major, "don't you see how that cockle-shell sports canvass, and runs away from all our oars."

"A bold one she must be, to sport a rag in

such a gale;—she must have some lost lives aboard, that it's all one drowning or hanging."

"That's the truth on 't," said another; "I see a head bobbing in her stern; and see there, she's mounting, there's another fellow lying stretched in her bottom. ———, pull, boys! pull!—I hear the two hundred pound reward clinkin' in our pockets."

"Now, by all that's good and great," exclaimed the Major, "it is a woman, and nothing but a woman, that guides and pulls yon boat at that rate."

"It's ould Sib of the Nun's—she'd scull a boat, the witch, against ony two rowers in blue jackets, and an ould hag too—split her!"

"Pull, boys, pull away!" cried the Major; "if we but catch 'em, the two villains shall hang, an' old Sib, as you call her, shall have the best drop in my canteen for licking, with her one oar and a petticoat of a sail, this six-oared barge."

Sib, however, did not give the Major credit for any such generosity, and believed, that if he laid hands on her, he would make her almost

share the fate of the fugitives, whom she was endeavouring to rescue from his grasp. Furiously, therefore, she plied her oar through the waves; and, although in imminent danger of being swamped every moment, she held on, and left the struggling barge in vain labouring to overtake her.

CHAPTER XVII.

THERE is something superlatively glorious in a chase, especially when the force of the pursuing vessel is so irresistibly greater than the skiff that flies; one's sympathies are always with the lesser, from the same principle on which the running fool bestowed half his glass regularly on the fore-wheel of the coach, as an encouragement for its not letting the big hind-one overtake it. In this case, when a female's prowess, which the muse of Ariosto, by the by, would have gloried in, was braving peril in the attempt to rescue her friends and kegs, and, what is more, seemed succeeding in her purpose, the very pursuers could not withhold the admiration extorted from them. They could not but laud old Sib; and laud her they did

with execrations. Still their exertions slackened not, incited, as they were, by the ideal clink of the two hundred guineas, and they tugged magnanimously against the breasting wave; whilst the wind, chill as it was, blew thick pearl-drops of mingled spray and perspiration from their foreheads. The Major's recommended gib had, 'twas found, done more harm than good, and had blown the barge to leeward far of Sib; who was now likely to make the land a full half-hour before them. The gib was accordingly lowered, with a fresh volley of oaths, and the barge toiled on by the force of oars alone.

The pursued made, in the mean time, with all her might, for the bay of St. John's, which she knew would be the best place for concealing Murtagh, and favouring the flight of O'Rourke. In despite of her benevolent toil, the old woman still found time and a subject for her deadly wit:—

“Arrah! look yonder, boys,” said she, “what does that quare lookin’ thing there mind you of?”

“ What would you have us lookin’ or thinkin’ of, but that boat full of blood-hounds aghter us ?”

“ Hout ! the sorrow a quicker they’ll come for yere looking about. It’s only Hudson’s gallows I was showing you—a pictursome object, as the gentlefolk say, that a clargyman of those parts rected to look at from his bawn. A pretty thing it is, an’ a proper for a minister, if he be a minister like yere Mr. Crostwhaite, to ha’ builded. But a gallows it is, the devil a halfperth else, as pictursome as they call it ; and sorrow a luck the poor boys of the Nun’s have had, since they builded it right afore us, but hangin’,—my curse attind the masons !”

While thus attributing the untimely fate of so many lads of the lake to the innocent erection, which its founder intended to represent the Pillars of Hercules, and which the neighbourhood knew by the name of Hudson’s gallows, Sib’s boat swept into the bay of St. John’s, where the shore of Connaught rose from the lake, with all the conveniences of concealment that the old dame had reckoned on. A

thick oak-copse, from which even the furious wind of that day had not shaken the adhesive leaves, covered the water-edge, whilst beyond it a full and far-extending wood of firs covered the rising ground, and shook their dark foliage in the storm, that seemed, by the continual noise of snap and splinter, to be making havoc among its brittle branches. Sib swerved not to any quay or landing-place, but ran straight forward till she was aground. O'Rourke she bade to save himself as best he could; Murtagh, as the more disabled, she assisted further, by lifting him out, and bearing him beyond the thick oak-copse that would have impeded him. Then she abandoned both murderers to their fate, with the remark, "that if e'er a one of their saints would exert himself half as much for them as she did, sorrow a fear there was of 'em!"

The old woman soon regained her boat, rowed it free of the bay; and some time before the barge arrived, she escaped from it without exertion, letting her skiff run down the wind, as she reposed, and enjoying, in the midst of her

anxiety for the fugitives, the labours of those who impelled the lagging barge, distanced by her woman's arm and puny oar.

From the barge's stern Major Hempenshaugh held towards her, as she retreated, his canteen bottle, by which motion he meant to entreat her to return and share it: but Sibby deemed the bottle to be an horse-pistol, shook her fist in return at the Major, and straightway plied her oars to get out of range of shot.

The revenue-barge was soon aground where the skiff had been; the Major and his crew, all save one, out among the breakers, and in an instant scattered through the copse in search of the fugitives. On and around they advanced and extended; and the steps of at least one fugitive were traced through the wood,—they were lost on joining the road; but a fresh track of a cart and horse, driven, it seemed, at full speed, told that the fugitive had met with assistance. This seemed a complete throw out; but the pursuers were not long in pressing a sufficient number of steeds into their service, on which they pursued as swiftly after the schoolmaster

by land, as they had just done by water. On that element, however, they had more success; soon gaining a view of the vehicle that bore the schoolmaster, namely, a cart and kish, in which lay O'Rourke vainly and hastily covered with straw and sods of turf. He was provided with no means of defence whatever; some of his gang not having been deterred by thoughts of either shame or friendship from robbing their dying captain, as they deemed him, of his arms: objects, indeed, which every peasant Carder coveted far above gold. Thus destitute, the dominie was overtaken in his kish by Major Hempenshaugh about two miles from St. John's, and secured in the midst of a village-street; all whose population were up in amazement, if not in arms, to witness the capture. Still they stirred not to his rescue, although eight armed men formed the whole force the Major had with him. They crowded around, however; questioned, talked Irish, and looked wicked; and coward and uncertain as they were, like a horde of savages prowling round a body of armed Europeans, Hempenshaugh made all haste to

his barge, aware how slight an accident, or how casual a word, would suffice to change their timidity into boldness, and their uncertainty into violence.

Murtagh still was not forthcoming. Unable to fly further than a few steps, he had, by his companion's help, ensconced himself in an almost impervious brake, by clambering up an oak-tree over it, and letting himself fall. There the wretch lay, listening to the searching steps of his enemies around him; their voices, too, threats, and remarks, dooming him to the punishment which at the time he scarcely hoped to escape. Had the fellows been silent in their prowlings, they might almost have heard the beating of the criminal's heart; yet so it was, that he escaped them altogether; and night closing, as well as the storm and the crowd of country-people increasing, the Major was obliged for the present to be satisfied with the capture he had made, and to discontinue further search. To the very brink the crowd accompanied him, the women mingled with the men; and he perceived, that if an attempt at

rescue had not been made, it was owing to the expostulations of the former.

The unfortunate O'Rourke now put forth to recross the lake towards a destination that little beseemed his birth, his education, or his talents. During a first brief half-hour of thoughtfulness, his mind seemed busy taking a last survey of the past; and the smile that at times flitted across his haggard countenance, betokened the recall of some hour of mighty promise, of ambitious delusion. He seemed to be calmed by the removal of suspense; and he that had been anxious, fretful, and even fearful in lurking, and in flight, recovered now both temper, self-possession, and even gaiety. Long accustomed to the society of the rabble, and but that of the rabble, he had at last acquired, what he but at first affected, their slang, their accent; nay, in part, the meanness of their thought. But this last crisis brought him back from the ways of intrigue and crime to his former self;—there was now no more to be hoped from the low paths into which he had descended; and strange to tell, the certainty of an igno

nious death restored O'Rourke to what he once had possessed,—the feelings and demeanour of a gentleman.

Hempenshaugh himself observed the change, and marked with astonishment the low and humble schoolmaster of Rathfinnan, grow dignified as a criminal beneath his grasp. As he further eyed his prisoner, and to remove his regard he began to feel, for some reason or other, strangely impossible, the Major was more deeply stricken: he had never before so closely scanned those features. And O'Rourke, who perceived the novel expression of the Major's look, could not repress the smile that it caused in him;—at the smile Hempenshaugh recollected himself.

“ Well, my good fellow,” said he, “ I have you at last ; little did I think, by Jupiter ! that the blood-spilling, mis-spelling Captain Carder was no other than the master of Rathfinnan hedge-school. And yet I should have known you ; for, curse me ! if I haven't seen you in the dock, I must have seen you in my dreams.”

“ In dreams you were not, Patrick Hemen-

shaugh," replied the dominie, "nor was I in a dock, when you saw and knew me; and if it were not for these fellows, whose looking up to you I would not spoil, I'd tell you where we met, and who I am."

"Never mind them," said Hempenshaugh; "gentility's not my staff of office; and against my honesty thou canst not speak."

"Do you remember Cashel, then, and O'Leary's school-house?"

"Do I?" said the Major: "undoubtedly, I well remember it."

"And do you remember the bailiff's big son, that came a day-scholar, and wasn't thought gentility enough by his comrades, till he beat them into respect?"

"I cannot forget myself at any rate. But were you there, who tellest me of all this? There was one of your name, but younger far;—it could not be;—his father was a wealthy man, and the youth himself a mild, gay, studious lad. And yet ——"

"Troth, an' that yet will just do, Major Hempenshaugh," said O'Rourke, resuming his ac-

cent of slang. "Sorrow a use in going further ;—for though I myself know no shame in ending my part as it will end, others will not think so ; and if they can't take pride out of me, I wouldn't have 'em take worse."

"Giles O'Rourke, Esquire, of Garretstown," continued the Major, whose memory, but not whose feelings, was excited by this discovery, "was hanged in Ninety-eight."

"Ay, that he was, rested be his soul ! and sacred be his memory ! and his father, and his father's father before him, up to the big rebellion of Sixteen Hundred and Forty-one. Cromwell's cannon and hook-nosed Will's sabres have had plenty to do with the family ; and there are more sprigs left of the tree to flourish after all ;—though soil, God knows ! there's little left for 'em now to root in. No matter—old Irish blood is like the ivy,"—and he pointed to the green mantled ruins of the Nun's Island, where he had sheltered, and which they were then repassing ; "it will root any where, —in the dry crevice or the hard rock, and out-flourish, after all, the usurping

forest-trees that have taken possession of the soil."

The Major appreciated all the treason, but little of the poetry, of the schoolmaster's simile; and seemed to be willing to put an end to a conversation of unbeseeming freedom between himself and his prisoner. Besides, he recollected the wily character he had to deal with,—one who had succeeded in carrying on his plans in secrecy so long, and who now, perhaps, invented this story to lull his vigilance or conciliate his favour.

O'Rourke divined his thoughts. "It's useless now, however, talking of past times; for, although a respectable descent might enrich the frontispiece of a dying speech, Judge Puffendorf would value little in a criminal what he prizes so highly in a horse; and as to our being acquaintances of old, Major, that's an old trick of Irish times and troubles; didn't Beresford patrol his friend Macnevin to the gallows? and sorrow a yeomanry trooper, if the truth was known, that hasn't done as much in hard times

for a friend. Few friendships like an Orange-man's," continued he, elevating his arm, and chuckling with his old mirthful spirit; "it will go to death's door with a body."

Major Hempenshaugh liked not the gay and easy tone of his prisoner; not only would his grave dignity be apt to suffer in collision with it, but he feared the effect of O'Rourke's wit upon his crew of satellites; who, Orange as they were, were also Irish, and consequently unable to resist being won by their country's humour, even although they met it in a White-Boy. The Major, therefore, cut short the increasing garrulity of the schoolmaster, by issuing commands and questions to his followers, and the gale furnished wherewithal to order and to chide. They had by this, however, almost surmounted its fury; and night had not yet settled into utter darkness, when they entered the inner lake. Across it they rowed in the still-during swell of the subsiding storm, guided in their course by the numerous lights that twinkled around the shores of the lake. None shone that night from on high, and O'Rourke, aban-

doned to his meditations, marked with feelings of despair that shook his calm, the distant lights of so many happy domestic hearths, that burned like glow-worms in the night. His fancy penetrated to the interior of all, and figured to him the selfish, low-thoughted owner, surrounded by the pleasures of domestic life, reaping the happiness he had earned by quietly awaiting it; whilst he, a man of purpose and of thought, who had sacrificed his youth, his rank, time; every thing, to the noblest cause, was a criminal, with death awaiting him; and even if this moment free, what was he better?—an out-cast, a wanderer: and his thought again recurred to the twinklings of some mansion ray, beaming from the light of the domestic hearth: —“ Ah!” cried O’Rourke, and he struck his forehead with the wild and theatrical air that over-strained and ambitious meditations had rendered natural to him, “ the man that weds ambition, shall never enjoy a home with his bride !”

A more poignant feeling of remorse remained to be excited, than that raised by pondering on

the vanity of ambitious projects. O'Rourke had often been upon the lake on nights such as this, had contemplated, too, the scattered rays that now awoke such feelings in him ; never, however, had he crossed these waters in an hour like this without perceiving the streaming lights of hospitable festivity to issue from a mansion, that now remained dim and undistinguished from the darkness. The murderer looked towards Plunketstown, but no ray marked where it stood ; he looked again, and shook his frame, as if to throw off the new and dreadful feeling that at that moment first descended upon him. Remorse is a capricious companion of crime ; sometimes attendant on, nay, preceding its execution ; but often slumbering beneath the weight of the determined, or the gaiety of the mercurial spirit, and biding a time, perhaps a long time, to seize its grasp ;—like the torturing flame in Vathek represented as fastening on the heart in the regions of Eblis,—it waits the signal of the fiend to commence its torture.

The village of Rathfinnan on its rocky height seemed to make amends, however, on this night

for the obscurity in which Plunketstown was shrouded. All its rushlights indeed seemed to have been put in requisition ; and as the barge neared its cove beneath, sounds of merriment and revelling were heard to issue from above, if themselves unexplained, at least explaining the unusual illumination of the village. The Major stayed not to conjecture, but sprang ashore, with his crew and prisoner, where he found some of his confidential Peelers awaiting his return. They soon clambered up the beetling precipice by the winding path, that steps more than art had hewn, and entered the village, the outskirts of which seemed utterly deserted, the population being seemingly all attracted to one central spot, whence the noise of revel and jollity was issuing. This chosen spot was no other than Tim Oulaghan's public-house, or rather, the house that once had been Tim's, now public property it would appear, from the absence of the landlord, who had departed no one knew whither. But neither the memory of Tim, nor the peril of O'Rourke, nor their own late discomfiture, seemed to press on the spirits of

the carousing party, who were all as merry as whiskey could make them.

“What’s all this?” said the Major.

“Sorrow a halfperth, your honour, but the wake—the squire’s, rest his soul! that’s dead.”

“And you’re waking the gentleman you murdered, you parcel of cold-blooded scoundrels.”

“Troth are we sure—and why not?” was the reply of one, not pretending to hear the Major’s last observation; “a good master he was and a kind; and a bright consolation it ud be to his soul this night, if it could look out of —— Paradise, and see what a beautiful wake Mr. Roderick has given the tenants.”

“And this is Mr. Roderick’s doing, is it?” said the Major.

“Arrah! to be sure, it’s his doing. Would you have him begin like a neger, and bury his brother *dry*?—that ud be a purty arnovation in the country. D’ye think the famales are to keen and the men to trudge miles across a country after a corpse without bit or sup to comfort ’em after?”

"If Mr. Phunket had died at a good old age, amidst a grateful tenantry, this might have been allowable."

"By my soul! he was ould enough to know better nor keep the company he did,—good couldn't come by it. And as for Mr. Roderick, will a drop in our throats be a tear the less in his eye? But your honour had better step in, you and Mr. O'Rourke there," continued the speaker, unconscious, as it were, of the school-master's bonds or state, and as if ignorant of all that ever happened, or was about to happen,—
"and take a glass to the mimory of the ould master."

"Step in I will, and have a look," said the Major; "perhaps I might get a sight of Murtagh Fallon, Tim Oulaghan, or some other friend of mine. Can you tell me, my good fellow, if either of them be within here?"

"Musha, then, maybe they are, your honour, —devil a bit of myself knows."

And the Major, surrounded by the gaugers and Peelers, and accompanied by his prisoner, partly borne, undauntedly entered the house of

merriment, and chilled by his appearance the better part of its mirth.

“ The dancing pair, that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down,”

retreated from the prostrate door, on which in the midst they had been performing their feats within the crowded ranks of the lookers-on; and each male, as the Major looked around, felt awkward a moment, as though his head were insecure upon his shoulders. All equally guilty, as the magistrate knew, still he could lay hold of none; and whatever power the law might give him to put an end to such meetings, still a wake was an old immemorial custom, and to infringe its privileges might be productive of serious resistance. A little recovered from their surprise, the assemblage greeted the Major and O'Rourke, with a “ kindly welcome,” and would perceive neither the bonds nor the fallen features of their captain.

Even he, O'Rourke himself, looked on his fellows for the first time with disgust;—before, he might have contemned their cowardice,

fickleness, and insincerity ; but stung with remorse at the moment for the act, to which his connexion with them had led him, he could not look upon their celebration of so shocking an event with any of his old feelings. Without exchanging one salute or nod of recognition, he turned, and begged to be conducted to his prison. He was obeyed, and conducted to the guardhouse, where sufficient force, even cannon, had been collected to prevent any attempt of the insurgents at a second rescue.

Meantime the wake went on as jovially as ever. Not a sigh, of course, was heaved for the memory of the master they had helped to murder, though they insisted on having those usual demonstrations of sorrow at his death. That is nothing wonderful ;—but even the appearance of O'Rourke amongst them, faint, and a prisoner, did not seem to throw the least damp upon their mirth. A moment's sympathy for their leader's fate was all they bestowed : were there hopes of rescue, they would have attempted it willingly ; but there remained none, and they saw no reason to check their mirth.

The whiskey circulated, that hobbyhorse of the Irish, which they consider *à-propos* to every thing,—it is a cure for sorrow, and a-kin to joy,—’tis drunk at births and deaths, at weddings and at wakes,—the infant just born gets a taste of this true liquor of life, and decrepid age, with the rattle of death in its throat, gets it *to die asy*,—it is the sovereign remedy for that “*pain of the hart*,” the only malady which the lower Irish ever confess;—in short, with plenty of it, the tortures of the Inquisition would undoubtedly be welcome to them; and a repeal of the distillery laws, I’m certain, would go further to content at least, if not to quiet them, than all the boasted benefits of either conciliation or emancipation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARTHUR Dillon was in the mean time tasting that bitter olive in the feast of life—a prison, so useful in bestowing a relish for the simple savour of liberty, and even an humble home. All at first was horror to him,—the malevolent creak of the gaol portal, with a fit accompaniment of jangling keys, the inquiring and possessorial look of the keepers, the gloom of the walls, the chill discomfort of the interior,—though the Grange itself was all as white-washed and as bare; but habit and a happy family contribute further to furnish a home comfortably, than the most ingenious upholsterer. The discontent of the eye, however, with the objects around it, is passing; and the only gloom or unhappiness that, after a little time,

Arthur felt upon his spirits, was that which reflections upon his fate and circumstances could not fail to communicate.

False as the accusation was of his complicity in the death of Blaney, still, as old Mr. Dillon eternally croaked and foreboded to his son, there was wanting but a little nucleus of well-sworn perjury against him, round which all the circumstances might closely twine, and corroborate its force; and thousands of villains were to be found in the country ready to swear any thing, not only for value received, but from the pure love of mischief, innate in the minds of the peasantry. This fear was the palpable cloud that overhung his spirit; and combated as it was by his indignation against its injustice, and that fortitude which a consciousness of persecution inspires, its continued presence and pressure effectually disgusted our hero with the wild and ambitious hopes that had lately buoyed him. The prospect of Irish independence, that he so ardently contemplated a few days since, he ceased to relish in a prison; the privations and horrors of which seemed likely

to prove all the consequences of attempting to realize such a dream. The lower orders of his countrymen, with whose wretchedness he had so sympathized, had considerably sunk in his admiration since the late scenes at Plunketstown; and the dying form of Mr. Plunket, his Lucy's father, his friend and benefactor, haunted and reproached him for having once entertained the thought of joining the ranks of such assassins. Lucy, too, his connexion with these Carders had made an orphan; and he had quitted her perhaps for the last time,—leaving her in feelings of just resentment against, and alienation from him.

As to his love-hopes, they were for ever utterly blasted;—how could he beg for reconciliation?—how intrude his unlucky and unfortunate presence on the mistress, whom he had deprived of a father?—or how aspire, degraded as he was by prison and suspicions, in addition to his former crimes of poverty and catholicism, to the hand of a proud and high-born lady? Then occurred the desperate thought of flinging himself utterly into the arms of treason and

rebellion; and either succeed in illustrating himself and name beneath the upreared banner of Irish liberty, or else succumb in giving truth to the suspicions under which, yet innocent, he laboured. This paroxysm, however, was but of short and feeble duration;—the hopes in the case were not substantial and promising enough for the spirit to repose under: and Ireland, even under its existing government, offered to his imagination many vistas to future eminence, attainable by the quiet exertion of talent; and which it seemed wiser to pursue, than to aspire higher by the troublesome and uncertain help of bloodshed and rebellion. Prison solitude, moreover, brought back his mind to the happy hours that he had spent in study; and on comparing, he began to think, that the excitement which books afford is as enlivening and satisfactory as the fever that attends politics and plotting. His worthy mother, too, found means to pay him a visit; and her sense and even eloquence, born in a moment, as it were, of her son and husband's misfortunes, contributed

to settle and direct the current of his thoughts towards quiet conduct and home.

Although the sum of our cogitations for a day may occupy a considerable compass, the sum of what passes through our minds in many, may, if we avoid repetitions, be included in a compass almost as small; and little more than what I have set down, would give a history of our hero's thoughts for some ten or fifteen tedious days. O'Rourke had been conducted long since within the same bolts and bars, as Arthur had learned, and was fast recovering from his numerous wounds, tended by surgical aid, as mistakenly kind in many instances as in this, when the patient was restored to life for the sole purpose of undergoing more dreadful suffering.

It had been ordered that none but near relations, or those with a particular order from the magistrates, should be admitted to the prisoners; still the ministers of religion could not be denied access to their flock. Arthur was startled by the appearance of one of these

in his prison, wearing not the honest, rosy visage of Father Flynn, but a hard, corded countenance, which he then for the first time beheld. No sooner had the turnkey closed the door on the devotions, as he thought, of priest and prisoner, than the former approaching Arthur, gave him the usual sign of the sworn; and straight plunging his hand into his pocket re-produced it full of guineas—"Take," said the ecclesiastic, "what you stand in need of."

"Good father, I need none of these," said Arthur; "to whom am I indebted for so kind an offer?"

"To those who never forget their friends—to the Grand Council of the Irish nation. But you are gentle, and take gold from no man,—'tis well,—we'll spend it in your service. Take these ten, however, for O'Rourke;—he needs them, and I dare not see him."

"And how am I to see him?" said Arthur.

"You shall see him this night," said the ecclesiastic; "there are the guineas."

"But I like not to take them," replied the youth, "nor do I want to see that murderer,—

that unfortunate O'Rourke. I have been implicated, even to the jeopardy of life, from trifles, and I will hazard no more. Take back your money."

"Are ye a Roman, and talk thus? Blessed seed of the martyrs! look down on us this day, and see to what the church has fallen,—a son refuses to peril his little finger in her behalf;—a heretic would do more."

"Heretic! or no heretic, father! you lose your breath in preaching. I will budge no further in the cause."

"You may not have much further, young man," said the priest, turning with a smile to the point where the gaol-front lay, "to budge."

"I thank ye, father, for your ghostly consolation. You seem to have no wish to budge whither you point. There is danger, it seems, in giving this money to O'Rourke—'tis you who must incur it."

"To show you I skulk not from peril, I tell you my commission. There is a slip of paper I have brought you;—note down thereon the names of every witness that you dread, and

appear they never shall in this world to confront you."

"Thank Heaven! I am not wilfully guilty of belonging to the party that can commission such a proposal."

"Indeed!—Suppose then, young man, the money and influence that are now ready to put a dozen witnesses out of your way,—suppose them expended in bringing twelve fresh ones to consummate your fate, and put out of *our* way a false and traitorous friend."

"Villain! you durst not do it!—who dare, who could, and one of your cloth——"

"My cloth, my general, esteem such doings holy," said the nettled ecclesiastic; "when deeds that in the broad way of life men shudder at, are but the more glorified by the remorse and horror they inspire, if done for the good of the Holy Church, and the honour of our Saviour and his Blessed Mother;" and the ruffian crossed himself devoutly.

"I have been bred up, Sir, for I will not call you father, in the Roman Catholic religion. Much laxity and ignorance have I observed in

it, the necessary attendants on its state in this kingdom ; but never have those nefarious principles, that I have read maliciously attributed to it in bigoted volumes, struck my ear till now."

" Learn them now, then, and embrace them, or they seal your lips for ever."

" Poor country ! poor religion !" exclaimed Arthur ; " cursed blindness of our rulers, who, amidst all their coercion, can never apply the prohibiting edict and the extirpating knife where both are truly wanting : they for ever accuse the poor Catholic of crime and demoralization,—and they blush not to send us an establishment, a living code, and fit teachers of both. You, Sir," said the youth, approaching his interlocutor, " are a member of the new college established amongst us—in fact, you are a Jesuit."

" I am," said the ecclesiastic, bending with affected humiliation before the Heavens, whither he turned, yet bursting almost with the pride of belonging to so illustrious a fraternity, " an humble follower of the order of Jesus. Books, it seems, have instructed you in our principles ;

I trust books have also inspired you with a salutary dread of our power."

"For my country, I do fear you, as I would the plague, if that were not a passing epidemic. For myself, fear is, at least, not for the present the predominant feeling which your proposal, your threat, and your presence excite. Be-gone, Sir! leave me. I will not say, do your worst, for I trust some seeds of manhood, of humanity, have been left within you unextir-pated by your hellish vows, and that you may not add by my unprovoked fate to the crimes of your order."

"If fear has not yet visited you, perhaps it may on being convinced of my power. You are a fine, mettlesome youth, well-born, and with a name well-sounding, that might grace a cause; and to lose you without the utmost effort were unpardonable. You see I am un-moved by your reproaches; I stand the master of your fate,—moved to your salvation by no love, to your perdition by no hate,—I but obey and work toward an end. My coming was but to try you,—for as to this gold," said the Jesuit,

as he returned it to his pocket, "I can convey it to O'Rourke's hand with as little danger as I could commit it to thine. 'Twas but a touchstone; and, trivial as it was, you shrunk from it! You've heard those heretic laics, amongst whom you've been, quote Scripture often, both in jest and earnest—it is, indeed, the plaything they are fondest of; and you have heard, that he that is not with the Church, is against it. I promise you, you must be with it, or be removed. We admit of no backslidings; and it is our deepest graven and most unshaken law, to cut short in the road those who swerve or will proceed in it no further. Therefore weigh, ere you reject. I ask you but to favour in heart the liberty of your country, the weal of your religion;—we ask of none to act till the means and surety of success are manifestly ours;—but bide our's in heart, and use whatever cloak your situation needs. I come to rescue you from present jeopardy, at my own immediate peril; yet you spurn me. Am I interested, think you?—how, or in what? Heaven knows, I have long forsworn all interests, save the great and paramount one."

“ Question not me, Sir ! your wheedling eloquence is thrown away equally with your threats. Just now you proposed, that I should mark out a number of my fellow-creatures for slaughter.”

“ Nay, I am not positive, on the contrary, am averse to unnecessary homicide ;—but where life is weighing against life, I would that our own children should survive. And if you think that you can ’scape without any summary removal of your enemies,—try it, in the name of Heaven ! Your hot-headedness hath utterly mistaken my character ; and if ’tis only this hardy proposal that disgusts you with the cause, we shall but prize the upright but mistaken honour that inspires such dislike. Your refusal to meddle with O’Rourke was prudent, perhaps—I wave every request ;—but still,” and the Jesuit approached our hero once more with the secret sign of the sworn, “ we may reckon on you as a son ?”

“ On mine honourable secrecy, no more !” cried Arthur, disengaging himself.

“Honourable secrecy! Think you we deem our secrets safe under the promise of the perjured?”

“——,” exclaimed the youth, “have you intruded here but to insult me?” and he rushed towards the door to call some one to rid him of his visitor.

The ecclesiastic prevented him. “Obstinate youth! you have provoked your fate; I have done my utmost to preserve you.” And the appearance of the turnkey, that came at the summons to let him forth, interrupted his further admonitions.

“O this land! this wretched land!” thought Arthur to himself, “that I were away from it for ever. A peaceful and honourable existence is impossible within it. It hath all the horrors, the crimes, the turbid life of romance, without one chivalric trait or character to redeem it. One weak step, one unresisted oath, has cast me into this labyrinth of misfortune, whence, perhaps, I ’scape not with my life. And to wade deeper with this remorseless Jesuit, even con-

sending not to blood, were but sealing the stone for ever over me. But I have taken my resolution—to abide by the humble lot of an obedient, even though a suffering, subject, nor think further of aiming at visionary fame through the horrors of rebellion. I have been proof against this insinuating, threatening priest, and the first act of resolution is a comfort; and even if power back his threats, which may well be in this land, I can but put my trust in Providence, and hoping the best, abide the worst.” And the youth sate him down to enjoy the consciousness of a firm and honourable resolution.

He had not sate very long immersed in these reflections, when the door of his apartment again opened, the key being turned with all the silence possible in the lock. The under-gaoler, or turn-key, made his appearance, and, without speaking a word, beckoned our hero to follow him. The unusual caution with which he entered did not greatly strike Arthur, who rose at his bidding, thinking it was, perhaps, for a walk in the courtyard, which was at times allowed him, that he was now summoned. His companion soon chid

his careless step. "Whisht! d'ye think it's to a patron ye're trudgin'?—an' what's the maning of yere havin' nails in your brogues?—sorrow a much shoe-leather there's worn here from the first step to the last quiver in our gig;—an' maybe it's myself that ud be takin' that step, if I was cotched; but who could be after saying no, to that ugly saint of a priest, and he a Carmelite?" So saying, or rather whispering, he unlocked the door of a cell, and shoving in our hero, closed it after him.

The present inmates of the cell were the self-same Jesuit and O'Rourke, who sate upright upon a straw pallet, much worn and haggard, though, perhaps, the greatest change in his appearance was occasioned by the abatement, or indeed, total loss of that flush in his visage, which a continual supply of ardent spirits had always kept up. At the pallet's foot stood the tall form of the Jesuit, clothed in the dark canonicals that were his passport to the prison, with unmoved countenance awaiting the effect which O'Rourke's expostulations, it seems, were to produce on the luke-warm proselyte to treason.

Arthur looked for retreat from such company, but the bolt of the cell-door had shot behind him. In O'Rourke he could behold but Mr. Plunket's murderer; and the Jesuit, who so mysteriously and facilely intruded into every prison cell, seemed to him a familiar of the Inquisition. Arthur turned from O'Rourke; and the Dominie, who seemed not prepared for such abhorrence, seemed as if he knew not what to say.

"You see, young man," said the Jesuit, breaking the silence, "here the proof of power I promised you. If my voice be heard here, in this prison, the strong-hold of Orangeism, how much more potent will it be in the open country, exerted for thee, or against thee?"

"I have answered you before," said Arthur; "and this second citation of me is but a useless display of your influence over turnkeys. All I ask, is to be delivered from any further converse with you."

The Jesuit turned with a smile towards O'Rourke.

"Come, come, my young Soph!" said the

Dominie, rallying; "this is surly behaviour of you; and not to speak of its foolhardiness when directed to such a personage as this, I promise you, it is uncivil to me, who stood thy sponsor at Ardross, and am consequently answerable for your steadiness. Moreover, I am here, thus," showing his manacles, "and with a black prospect before me, all on thy account."

"On mine!"

"Are you serpent-hearted enough to question it, young man? What brought me to Plunkets-town, except your capture? and what discovered me, but your harping in and taking part with those Orange blood-hounds. Nay, be not impatient; — 'twill not lighten my lot to charge others with causing it; and all I plead for is, that you bestow me your attention in return. When we spoke on this subject in Dublin, you heard me patiently; I considered you, in short, true to your oaths; as such you have been represented to the council; and that grateful body, who set a just value on your name, birth, talent, have sent a special mission down to aid you in now getting free, and also to honour you with

an acting part in the management of this district, from which death will soon cut me off."

The earnestness of one speaking of the speedy death that was before him, could not but command the hitherto unwilling attention of Arthur.

"But you must be aware," continued O'Rourke, "of the terrific and stern laws necessary to bind and keep together the members of a far-spread conspiracy;—they are not less infallible, believe me, in reaching their victim, than the British ones, that come round in wig and parchment to take their half-yearly tithe of blood;—and not the less awful, because they strike their blows in silence. Come not beneath the edge of their axe. Choose the path that religion, patriotism, ambition, and manly spirit point out—be an Irishman! is all we ask; and show you are not numbered with the rabble. This reverend Father is ready to minister to you the highest and most secret oath of the union, that will enroll you amongst its loftiest defenders. Rouse thyself, Arthur Dillon! act worthy of thy name! I will give

up my life contentedly, if I leave in thee a young and spirited partisan to the cause."

"No! Mr. O'Rourke: I cannot but admire your spirit, even sullied as it is with crime; crime! that Heaven forbid I should think committed on my account; but your delusion I cannot imitate. Of swearing, I have had sufficient experience; and this reverend personage, whom you bid me dread, I dare say with reason, does not tempt me to put my hands within his."

"Then let his fate be accomplished!" exclaimed the Jesuit; "more breath has been spent in arguing with a stripling's obstinacy, than in counselling for the safety of a tried friend, lost in his worthless behalf. If Heaven takes a friend, it takes a foe; and should the scaffold prove thy doom, O'Rourke, this renegade shall bear you company."

"Hold yet a while," said the Dominie, "I have been instrumental in bringing this youth so far, and would recall him from the madness of now attempting to retreat. Consider, you will die a convicted murderer!—the county, the

magistracy, think you guilty ; and witnesses in hordes can be forthcoming to swear what shall be dictated ;—your revelation of all that I now speak, would be looked on but as a trick. Know you what it is to die an esteemed murderer?—to leave that stigma on your parents and your brethren !”

“ All idle preaching ! You have not convinced, and shall not frighten me. Have you any more horrors to hold up to my view ?”

“ Yes !” said the Jesuit, taking up the word, “ a lovely and a noble girl, wishing that the earth would cover her for having loved an assassin, yet anxious and fearfully interested in his fate —— ”

“ Villain !”

“ Shattered by the varying, thick-coming reports of doubt, suspense, and at last condemnation, till her gentle spirit sinks at last under the horrors of his execution.”

“ Fiend of an inquisitor !—I had rather suffer all those horrors, that curdle my blood to imagine, than ally with you for an hour. Do your worst, and let me begone !”

CHAPTER XIX.

BEFORE the end of the week, the judges and their legal suite made their entry into Mullingar, with all the parade of squeaking trumpets, rattling equipages, and yeomanry. And to none was their arrival more welcome than to the greater part of the inhabitants of the gaol: immured many, perhaps, justly enough, but more upon such light suspicions as an ignorant and party-heated magistracy will often think sufficient for committal. On the next day the assizes were opened by a charge from the presiding judge; in which he lamented the swelled calendar of crime, and the increased disturbance of a county, which hitherto has been remarked for its tranquillity and peaceable character. From this exordium he drew, however, no con-

clusion, too polite to inculcate the magistracy which he addressed, for either their remissness and over-vigilance; and this matter of form being gone through, the court proceeded to fulfill its functions.

The Grand Jury, in the case of many of the prisoners, anticipated their trial, and liberated them from prison. It had been hoped by many there, especially by Mr. Roderick Plunket, that they would have done the same by the Dillons; and even Lord Castletown Belville himself, on a previous review of the evidence, had thought that it would be best to abandon the prosecution: but strange to say, fresh witnesses had come forward, and most important evidence been produced on the day or two preceding the assizes, that altered very materially the hopes on both sides. The jury found the bill; and the fresh list of witnesses against them put into the Dillons' hands, as ordered by the law, informed Arthur at once, by its length and strangeness, that the Jesuit had put his menaces into execution.

This sudden spring of proofs against the

Dillons had the effect of deferring their trial, which had otherwise been called on early, to the last days on which the court sate. O'Rourke, in the mean time, was brought to the bar, with a few other obscure associates, and accused of the murder of the unfortunate Mr. Plunket. The proofs against him were too clear and full to be resisted; and the verdict, in spite of all the law-artifice that could be employed in his favour, was but what every one must have expected. From the holding up of his hand, to the pronouncement of his sentence, O'Rourke's countenance changed not;—in dress and accent he was the schoolmaster of Rathfinnan, no more; and Hempenshaugh acquiesced in the criminal's wish, of not being known as any connexion of the O'Rourke's of the county Tipperary. The counsel employed for him, indeed, seemed not to labour to establish his client's innocence so much, as he did to establish his insignificance; and the most anxious aim of the learned gentleman, directed no doubt according to the tenor of his instructions, was to represent O'Rourke but as the chance leader

of that night—a mere leader of rabble! unlikely by birth or character to be connected with any higher agents of rebellion. To all this the criminal submitted, though indignantly; and the heavings of his spirit against this utter selfishness of his defenders were magnanimously repressed. Once, indeed, and once only, he seemed tempted to rebel, and was scarcely restrained by the devotion and blind obedience that he had sworn to the cause, from asserting in full court his rank, both as a gentleman and a rebel. The counsel for the crown had mentioned the learning and information possessed by the accused, as bespeaking a being of a better order: and to this, his pert opponent retorted with remarks derisive of this supposed learning of a hedge-schoolmaster. “I have heard it advanced,” said he, “by gentlemen of this county, men of much literary acquirements and knowledge, too, that the scene, the actual site of Goldsmith’s Deserted Village is in this county, and not many miles distant from the scene of the outrage now be-

fore your lordship;—and that the poem I have mentioned, faithfully pourtrays that part of the county. Now, to that classic poem I can refer you, gentlemen of the jury, for the learning and acquirements of my client, so much magnified by my brother opposite to his disadvantage. My client, moreover, is a man in years, and although not perhaps young enough to have been the type of the poet's verse, he is certainly a successor of similar rank and profundity of learning,—

‘Lands he can measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story runs, that he can guage.’ ”

But the dominie, who bore the accusation of murder with patience, was indignant at this contemptuous comparison, and broke silence to punish his advocate, although, at the same time, he preserved the accent and demeanour of low life.

“My lord, you’re a kind judge, and a considerate, t’ us, poor devils,—and I hope you’ll be allowing me the benefit of this.”

"Of what?" said his lordship.

"That my counsellor yonder, God bless him! doesn't know what he's talking about."

"You're sure to have the benefit of that, my good fellow," said the crown-lawyer, laughing. And the whole court indulged in a laugh at Mr. ——'s expense; O'Rourke still preserving his assumed stolidity of countenance.

All this, however, was argument beside the question, not affecting the important conclusion, soon decided, of life or death. The only other circumstance remarkable in the trial, was the total silence of O'Rourke respecting the Dillons. He could not be brought to utter a word about them;—whether they were or were not the cause of the attack on Plunketstown, and whether they were leagued or not with the carding-band, that he, O'Rourke, had headed. Nothing on this point was elicited from either prisoner or witnesses; the latter being merely the Peelers and policemen, that witnessed the murderous shot. The fate of Blaney was still before the peasantry; and although, according to the vulgar proverb of "Put an Irishman

on a spit, and you'll soon get another to turn him," traitors to their secret cause were seldom wanting, at present none were forthcoming. The vengeance of the law was fulfilled without them; and the unfortunate O'Rourke condemned to be drawn to the gate of Plunkets-town, and there hanged within sight of the scene where the murder had been committed.

It was but what Arthur must have expected to be the fate of his quondam acquaintance; yet, for all that, the actual tidings struck upon him with all the force as though they had been utterly unforeseen. In spite of his own accusation and imprisonment, and the place of it, the image of the last termination of a criminal's existence had never before become so palpable to him; and he gasped in horror at the new reality, which such thoughts had on a sudden assumed to his view. The Jesuit, too, with his sanguinary proffers, and as sanguinary menaces, now intruded more fearfully than ever on his forebodings;—his waking and his dreaming became confounded into one succession of horrors; and in the utter dejection and aban-

donment into which he sank, for perhaps twenty-four hours, after being told of the fate of O'Rourke, the hated Jesuit himself, if introduced, might have found Arthur so little of the hero, as perhaps to have acceded to plans of security, which at other moments he would have disdained.

The mind, however, rallies after a little, even in the midst of impending horrors; and a visit from Mr. Roderick Plunket, who now, as possessor of Plunketstown estate, was in attendance on the assizes in great splendour and influence, contributed to rouse him. Never was a man endowed with greater capabilities of oblivion than Roderick;—on past and future he could close the door in a thrice; and even of the actually present, he could just behold what he fancied, and no more. As much for pastime, as for sympathy with our hero, he had entered the prison: not, indeed, that he was without a sincere regard for Arthur, but the fresh occupation and excitement attendant on taking possession of a handsome property is.

really too absorbing an object to allow old friendships much anxiety or notice.

“Glad to see you here, my boy,” said Roderick, as he entered; “ay! *here*;—who has spunk, without an acquaintance with the elegant interior of these palaces? Poor George, a gay and a good fellow he was; and for an elder brother, a very prince, in a character that we younger ones are always apt to consider a bore. That murdering villain O’Rourke, what a keen shot the fellow was, is to be hanged to-morrow, and at my avenue-gate, which is a damned bore, as I told Castletown Belville. I had rather they quartered Crostwhaite upon me at Plunketstown, pulpit, by G—! canonicals and all!—we would quiz the fellow;—but a swinging corpse in a pitch shirt and chains, for I hear they are to gibbet him, is no joke,—at least, whatever it might be for me, I durst not;—the *blues* here would call me an *atheist*, as they do all stout-nerved persons that don’t shudder, read novels, and do the seamstress, like themselves. And, to tell the truth, hang-

ing is an ugly jest, as I know ; G—! I was near the *garotte* myself, for sliding sideways, like a shadow, through a convent grill ;—but you don't look well."

"Confinement, anxiety, fifty things," said Arthur.

"That's odd, I always fattened on bread and water, but some can't. And to tell the truth, G—! you've reason. Thought you clear and clean out of it two days ago,—when a set of ugly fellows started up, thick as blackberries, and eager to swear as if they were paid for it, against you. What's to be done with them?"

"Done!—what could be done?"

"Why, paid to be sure. I'll be your treasurer willingly, and money they shall have ; but I-know not how to find the dogs, and am a blunderer in such businesses that are not off-hand ;—but there must be fifty sneaks about such a place as this, who would undertake the office."

"A thousand thanks! Mr. Plunket, for your very friendly offer. But 'tis needless ; and if discovered, would prejudice me. Besides, I

would not owe my life to subterfuge. If villany can ruin me, let it. I abandon myself; innocent, to the defence of Providence."

"The worst lawyer on circuit, proverbially," said Roderick; "but if you really have certain hopes, independent of these by-ways, all the better."

"Pray, how is Miss Plunket, Sir?" said Arthur.

"Gadso! Lucy? 'pon my soul, haven't seen her since. She's moping at Inchfearris; doing mourning, all natural, but nonsense, as you know. I couldn't even get a sight of Honoria. And Travers himself looked black as an undertaker at me, when I made my appearance. The veteran thought I was too light-hearted after poor George's death. I tell you what, Travers, said I, the best way to mourn is to fulfil the will of the deceased;—there's a renewal of the island lease for you: and I left him in a brown, though I believe not a dark-brown study. And now that I am in the vein of business, Dillon, let me tell you, that offer of my brother's was not so despicable as you seemed to think."

The cheeks of Arthur here grew crimsoned.

“ But mark, I repeat it not. You’re innocent, I do believe, and will escape without interference. ’Tis, however, fair to warn you that I am Lucy’s guardian;—she unguardedly confessed to me her predilection for you,—but of the secrets gained in my younger brotherdom, the elder brother will not take advantage;—the match is ineligible, not the thing,—spare your indignation,—and to my utmost will I oppose it—that’s all. And now give me your hand.”

Arthur could not deny it to so frank a foe. ’Twas shaken cordially, and Mr. Roderick took his departure, making the stairs and passages of the prison resound, as he descended, with the unusual noises of creaking boots and a careless whistle; which latter, however, was on a moment’s thought repressed.

A gay-looking billet was soon after handed in to Arthur: it ran as follows:—

“ Condemned Cell,
—this penultimate day of our existence.

“ Mr. O’Rourke presents his compliments to Mr. Arthur Dillon, and would be happy to see

him at nine o'clock, as business of the utmost despatch will call him away in the morning."

And at bottom was hastily scribbled,—

"I dare not ask to see a prisoner, for fear of prejudicing him, but if he makes the request, it cannot be refused; and I promise you it will not be noised beyond these walls. At such a time, such a request cannot be denied by you."

Arthur felt that it could not; and made the demand to be permitted to see O'Rourke.

"Whisht wid you a bit!" said the turnkey, "ould Wilkins is fidgetting about the prison, counting and feasting, I do be thinking, on all the necks he's cracking. Them that's paid for doing the like, don't take half the delight of Wilkins, the gallows-feeder of a lord."

In about a couple of hours, Arthur's request had been made known to the superior ruler of the prison, and granted. Into O'Rourke's dungeon he was accordingly shewn; and the victim he found yet engaged in finishing a general ablution of his person. The Dominie coolly

offered his excuses for this impoliteness; but his iron ornaments, he said, had so impeded his toilette, that he had not yet concluded it. "They call me at cock-crow, they say, to proceed on this trip, and there will be no time for adorning. 'Tis strange, is it not? the predilection all we condemned criminals get suddenly for cleanliness?—Heaven knows, I cared little for it in life, even when there was nothing but trifles to distract me; and now, within a few hours of eternity, the reaping of my beard and the laving of my person, occupies and interests me."

"I thought, indeed," said Arthur, "to find you occupied with graver thoughts."

"Praying, I suppose?—ah! that account's soon settled in our comfortable creed;—there's a fellow-convict of mine in the next cell, of the new English religion, breaking his heart morn and night, and the sorrow a comfort he seems to come near; his priest seems but to whet his agony. Now, my black Jesuit sets me at my ease at once; he proves my act a blessed one, and my death a martyrdom."

“And what do you think of it yourself, O'Rourke?”

“What I did think of it, to tell the truth, was ugly enough; but I never refused a good offer; and since that hard-featured priest offered me absolution, I'm not the cavilling Lutheran to resist,—'tis looking a gift horse in the mouth.”

“How can you jest at such a time, on such a subject?”

“In troth I know not, and wonder even as you. But my spirits are as buoyant as boyhood's self; and I feel, as the vessel of Columbus must have felt, had it a soul, when launched for the Western Continent. This homicide was unfortunate, I own; but then it befell me in the prosecution of a noble and patriotic end, and in an enterprise immediately prompted by friendship and the honourable bond of party.”

Arthur shook his head.

“That's a shake worthy of the bluest presbyterian I ever met in the black north; those fellows that will neither let a man go to Heaven or the gallows his own way. You

seem shaken in your religious, as well as in your political creed, young man."

"If not distorted in my moral one by either, I shall be contented," said the youth; "but for what purpose was your wish to see me signified?"

"To try upon you the persuasive powers of a dying man, since you allow not the martyr."

"It is in vain, O'Rourke!"

"Then your doom is sealed,—I warn you."

"Be it so. I know not what I might have been; but henceforward never will any inducement join me to the party, since I have got an insight into its ways."

"Curse the party!" said O'Rourke, endeavouring to take a step, that his chains forbade; "it has sacrificed me, and will any one;—by Heaven! five hundred pounds had bribed me free of these walls, and they would not;—not that they grudged or could not spare the sum, but once out, now that I am known and blown, I were of no further use, and mayhap dangerously deep in their projects. *Ce n'est que dans les corps qu'on est ingrat*; and I believe

the proverb of our allies. . . . But I am an individual, and cannot plead the right of the united many, of a body corporate, to forget my honourable duty ;—I may not betray—I must die clean, as these ruffians call dying true to each other ; but you, young man, high, proud, hopeful, and talented—just what I was twenty years since,—I feel, as though I suffered over again in your person,—be persuaded,—conciliate this agent of the council's, this cursed Jesuit."

"No," said Arthur ; "I have weighed the consequences on both sides, and am determined to cut at once the link between me and them. Acquiescence now would irremediably involve me at another time. Besides, we are somewhat beloved in the country ; and I cannot believe our peasantry such miserable wretches, as for mere gain-sake, to send forth perjurers to swear my poor life away."

"Alas ! you know them not as I do. They are generous from impulse, and but the more dangerous on that account ; because that good quality is prominent, and hides the deep implanted love of mischief, and talent for it, which

Heaven: has planted especially in an Irishman's breast. I feel it in myself, and recognise a kindred, though a vulgarer feeling perhaps in the rabble that I led. You cannot reckon upon them ever; they are below you in civilization; and the little moral sense that ignorance and brutality would let in on them, is intercepted by religion; and rightly so, if it put any thing efficient in the place. But it does not, I own, and you lament. You have no hold on them that does not, like an inefficient rudder, give way to the force of their whims and passions. They'll save your life to-day at the risk of their own, and swear it away to-morrow with the same coolness;—there is not one of them, who is not a little Machiavel;—sincerity is utterly unknown to them, and never do I hear their mouths open, except with an aim, either in flattery, in wheedling, in drawling demands of pity, or desperate denunciation of violence. The Irish, I tell you, are in one word a cunning people; and to the exercise and love of that cunning will they sacrifice every thing, friends, foes, and themselves."

At any other time, Arthur could have smiled at this philippic, in which the disappointed spirit of O'Rourke vented his indignation.

"But I will not curse them," said the Dominic; "I who have been all my life tilling for the sowing of these serpents' teeth;—Heaven grant you live to see the harvest. And that will never be, if your only reliance at present be on the love or honesty of your countrymen. Put not your trust in princes, said the sacrificed noble;—put not your trust in people, saith the sacrificed demagogue—and that am I. But go, young man, I admire your firmness, and will no longer combat it, and this heat becomes not the last hour's of life; and yet when I think upon my hopes, my wrongs, my fate, and thine, how can I be otherwise? I looked to death—to this death often; but then I reckoned on meeting it calmly and contentedly, as a debt I should pay willingly to my cause and country;—but oh! I've seen too much the inside of ambition;—the wedges, pegs, and screws, as Lucian says, that fill the hollow effigy of the Jupiter men worship; and

all the unshaken constancy with which I *will* meet my fate, must be drawn, not from the store of patriotism; religion, or any other of those vaunted balms. These wells of vigour, that I reckoned on, are dry; and the firm animal spirits of the animal O'Rourke, must supply the sum of my heroism. O world! to such thy dreams evaporate. Farewell, young man; I hope not to meet till you have run a happy and an honourable career in this life;—leave me, lest you would have me, like a seethed iron, sink yet hissing to the grave.”

Without a word, Arthur wrung the hand of O'Rourke, whom he forgot as the murderer, and viewed but as the warm and unfortunate partizan. He retired to his couch, but not to sleep. Every sound seemed to him some dreadful note of preparation for the morning cavalcade; and every heavy step that ascended and descended the damp stone-stair, seemed that of the officer, come to conduct the criminal to his fate. Meantime, the object of all Arthur's anxiety was lost in a sound, oblivious sleep, to which his agitated conversation had perhaps contributed.

He slumbered, as it is reported most criminals do, on the very threshold of eternity; and not one dream of a future so near him, intruded to scare him from a repose, that all his powers demanded.

The gloomy reality that Arthur spent the night in imagining, came with the gray peep of morn. The busy step of the awful summoners was on the stair, the stamp of cavalry in the court below, and even the ponderous rumble of artillery was heard to join the escort. Arthur extended his hands to Heaven,—he knew that firm and heavy step, even unaccompanied by the rattle of chains that marked whose it must be;—they descended; the step of the one distinct from those of the many, died away;—there was a noise of wheels, as of a carriage drawing up,—a pause—and straight the whole procession was in noisy motion. Arthur drew breath,—sprung from his couch upon the floor of his prison, and there prostrating himself, prayed that Heaven might rescue him from that ignominious fate.

The escort that attended the criminal on this

his last journey, was more like the advanced guard of an army than any thing else. It consisted of a regiment of infantry, two troops of horse, and two field pieces, not to mention the magisterial and constabulary force, that swelled the procession. The criminal, with his Jesuit confessor, occupied a post-chaise, pressed with some difficulty into the service, and to which the finisher of the law himself, with all his paraphernalia about him, was obliged to act post-boy. This figure could not but extract a smile from every beholder, not excepting O'Rourke himself, as the ominous postilion jogged contentedly along, carrying the fatal halter round his own neck, and, with the utmost *sang froid*, using its other extremity to urge on his lagging steeds.

Lord Castletown Belville and Major Hempenshaugh, were also of the procession; and the two magistrates frequently rode past the chaise in which the criminal was seated, to mark if there were any signs of contrition or confession in him. But no!—For a long time O'Rourke looked blank and unmoved at them,

leaning back absorbed, and even inattentive to the spiritual comfort, which his reverend companion seemed most anxiously and devoutly administering. Once or twice, however, the magistrates thought to perceive more contention and anger, however quelled at their approach, between penitent and sinner, than became the parties and their situation.

“Now if that black priest were not there,” said Hempenshaugh, “would this criminal tell us something. He has the face of one bursting with a secret,—he must have something to reveal,—hark !”

The chaise-window was thrown open at the moment, and the wild head of O'Rourke thrust forth, while his companion within seemed tugging to drag him back.

“Hear me, gentlemen, I have something to say,” said O'Rourke; and the Peer and Hempenshaugh eagerly drew near.

“Peace, my son,” broke in the Jesuit, “interrupt not your last devotions by idle talk, nor spoil a martyr's death by p———”

“Spoil a martyr's death by perjury!—well

said priest; but I warn you, interrupt no more the prisoner in his confession, or I shall put the contents of this pistol through your serge gown."

"Oh that the Holy Virgin would prompt his hand to do it," exclaimed the Jesuit, clasping his together; "I would give ten lives to see thee going whither this unfortunate man now goes."

As Hempenshaugh liked not to oblige the Jesuit altogether in this way, he put up his pistols.

"Hear me!" said O'Rourke, "hear my last words. The Dillons are innocent, and know no more than the child unborn of Blaney's death."

The Peer turned his rein from the chaise with a contemptuous snuff, as much as to say, is this all?

"Ah! Wilkins, Wilkins, lord or squire, which ye be, the curse of a sufferer light on you!" cried O'Rourke; "when you think I would betray my comrades to blood, you listen, but if I speak to wash away the stains from the innocent, you shrink back."

“ Drive on, you rascal !” cried Lord Castletown Belville to the executioner postilion, who had paused in order to allow this colloquy to reach his own ears, as well as those of others.

It was ten o'clock when the cavalcade reached the gate of Plunketstown, opposite to which the temporary gallows was erected, commanding a view of the mansion. It paused ; the military drew up, and the criminal descended. He mounted with a firm step the cart, the driving on of which was to serve as a drop ; and thus elevated he advanced for the purpose seemingly of addressing the crowd. He could not have before regarded it, for on looking down and seeing it utterly composed of women and children, he stared with astonishment ;—not one male peasant was there— not one friend to witness his fate or receive his parting words.—“ Even in death forsaken,” muttered he.

“ Culprit, have you any thing to communicate ?” said the sheriff riding up.

“ Hear ye that ?” said O'Rourke, address-

ing the female crowd, " wives of cowards, afeared to come and see a brither die ; bear witness, that Phadrick O'Rourke died stout and *clane*."

In a few minutes the Dominie was no more.

CHAPTER XX.

AFTER having been several times brought up and remanded, and suffering all the horrors of suspense, the Dillons were at length put to the bar. The approaching trial had excited very great interest throughout the country; and the court-house, or old apartment that had been fitted up temporarily as such, was thronged, both inside and outside, with the attendant crowd. Solemn as the scene appeared to Arthur and to those concerned, to a stranger it would have seemed any thing rather than a court of justice. The judge himself in his wig and slippers, was a wag and a punster; and seemed determined not to open the business of the day, till he had exhausted his jokes. As president too of so awful a

court, he commanded a flagrant want of respect; Mr. Roderick Plunket, for instance, walking up with his usual effrontery, and taking his seat by the judge's side upon the bench. The lawyers even had dispersed with the grave paraphernalia of their profession, and sate, ungowned and unwigged, bandying jokes with the bench. At length the voice of the clerk of the court seemed to remind them that there was some business to be done; and the advocate for the crown, composing his features by a moment's down-poring on his brief, began with deprecation of his present painful duty, &c. ; and with a good deal of florid exaggeration opened the case.

The counts of the indictment were several; some containing a simple accusation of treasonable practices; the being sworn, the having attended secret meetings and such;—others, as having been privy and accessory to the murder of Blaney. The former accusation had been all that the magistrates for a long time had hoped to establish; but later witnesses had offered themselves, ready to swear

so home against the Dillons for having been privy to the murder, that this last point was now mostly dwelt upon. Major Hempen-shaugh and others were first examined, and they related all the circumstances respecting the murder of the informer; their evidence leaving little doubt of its having been committed by the steward of the Grange. But the thing to establish was, how far Murtagh was connected with his masters. Blaney's written information respecting Ardcross, and Arthur's being sworn there, was given in evidence; but from a full confession respecting this event, Arthur was no longer withheld, since the death of O'Rourke, and the escape of Timothy Oulaghan; so that an avowal of the truth was likely enough to parry this, if stronger evidence did not appear.

At length a fellow was summoned to the table, with whose countenance the Dillons were wholly unacquainted. He swore that he was a member of the Carders' gang; that he had been at Ardcross on the night of the swearing in of Arthur; that the youth had been brought in by Timothy, and kept by in a corner till

some were sent away; and that then he was sworn without evincing the least reluctance or resistance. That he had seen him frequently at meetings since; that on Saturday the 31st of October, he had met Murtagh, who boasted that he was going to the Nun's for Mr. Arthur to help them to nick the black sheep the morrow, meaning Sunday; and, moreover, that he had seen Arthur enter Tim Oulaghan's house that night at midnight, and that a council was there held, in which the fate of Blaney was determined. "He was not there himsel'," he said, "he only seed Master Arthur Dillon goin' in; and as to what they were about, all the country knew it, sure."

The counsel for the crown having extracted all that he wanted from this witness, little Macnally, the counsel for the prisoners, was allowed to cross-question him; and that clever advocate commenced in his own keen way to undermine the temper first of the witness, well-knowing that coolness was the only cement by which the perjured villain could hold his story together. The lawyer succeeded in the

space of a very few minutes, to set the witness beside himself with passion, which, instead of the stormy, rudely bursting resentment that we see in general, was in the present case evinced by a writhing of the person, by an awful pallor of the countenance, and an agitation of the lips that amounted almost to foaming.

“And now, Sir,” said Macnally, “as you say, that all the country, and consequently yourself, knew on Saturday night that this murder was to take place on Sunday, why did you not give information to a magistrate?”

“I didn’t say no such thing,” replied the witness.

“Never mind what you said. I mind that. Answer the question. Why didn’t you give information?”

“Why didn’t I give information? Ah, then, why should I? Do you take me for a fool, Mr. Counsellor?” said the witness, not at all aware of the necessity under which all his Majesty’s liege subjects are bound in this respect.

“More for rogue than fool, a wondrous deal.”

And here the crown counsel interfered to save the witness, as he said, from his learned brother's abuse, but really for the purpose of giving the fellow an opportunity to recover his self-possession.

A young barrister, a friend of Arthur's, who happened to be seated under the prisoners, was whispered by him at this moment, and he as quickly conveyed the remark to the counsel's ear.

"Now, Sir, you say you watched the prisoner entering Mr. Oulaghan's public-house on the 31st of October?"

"Ay, on All-Hallow's-Eve, sure enough."

"And where was you?"

"Troth then, I was in Tim's own garden."

"What were you doing there?"

"Sorrow a halfperth I was doing, only borrowin' a few parsnips for the caulcannon, Sir."

"A pretty hour, truly, to be borrowing vegetables in the garden of another!—here is a lie with a circumstance."

"Brother! brother!" interrupted the opposite barrister.

“ I repeat it,” said the other, “ the fellow confesses himself a stealer of parsnips in order to give himself credit by the confession for all the inventions he utters besides.—And you were in Timothy Oulaghan’s garden, out of your own house at midnight on All-Hallow’s-Eve ? Now, by the virtue of your oath, do ye think, there is one man in the county, except yourself, dare venture out at such an hour, on such a night ?”

“ Musha then, how can I be tellin’—for why shouldn’t they ?” said the fellow hesitatingly.

“ Ye never heard tell of the *good people*, not you,” said the lawyer ; “ at least if you did, you thought I knew nothing about them. Gentlemen of the Jury, I appeal to you and your knowledge of the country, if you think it probable that a peasant, like the witness, could have ventured out at midnight on All-Hallow’s-Eve, at an hour when all honest Christians believe the fairies to be abroad, unless he were a man of no religion or trust, and consequently a man whose oath cannot be considered available in taking the life of another.”

Ridiculous as this plea may seem to our readers, it had its due effect in the place where it was delivered ; and its force and truth was acknowledged by the smothered acclamations of the peasants that thronged the open space of the court.

Still the weight of evidence lay heavy at least against our prisoner ; for even the prevarication of a witness, when under the torture of a keen lawyer's interrogatory, are often overlooked. And the fellow, a small part of whose examination has been just given, was not solitary in his false testimony. Another, and another came forward to corroborate and out-top him, each confining his evidence, as far as it was in his power, to one minute fact, and keeping clear of giving any diffuse or general account, in the extended connexions of which their consistency would be apt to fail. In vain little Macnally struggled to irritate, to puzzle, to confound : the fellows were too schooled to admit of their making any important slip ; and some of them even were possessed of sufficient of their country's shrewdness to lay the lawyer on his back

by the cunning with which they baffled his aim, and by the stolid-seeming point of their repartee.

The summing up of the case for the crown was truly appalling to Arthur by the succession of evidence that it enumerated and dwelt on. The swearing of the younger prisoner was clearly proved, it said, in the first instance, and the plea of its being forced was rendered of no avail by the circumstances having been kept strictly secret. The prisoner even quits the country, lest the wound he received in either himself firing at his Majesty's troops, or at least having been in company with those who did, might betray him. In the metropolis, the prisoner is found in close connexion with O'Rourke, the unfortunate culprit lately executed for a deed of violence, similar to that then before the court: this is proved by a letter found among the effects of O'Rourke, seized at Rathfinnan, in which the prisoner writes to his parent in a discontented and ambiguous tone, that could be construed but into treasonable designs. His re-appearance in the country is simultaneous

with that of O'Rourke, and his first act is a deed of blood and violence, committed on the person of the present worthy possessor of Plunketstown. And here Mr. Roderick Plunket stood up from his seat next the judge, and was about to disturb the dignity of the court by denying the fact advanced, when he was silenced by the judge himself. From the dreaded consequences of this act, honourable, if Mr. Plunket will have it so, he again retreats: when it has blown over, he returns once more, and the county, like a cannon that infallibly explodes on the contact of the match, again bursts forth into an act of violence immediately. A murder is committed under his own eye, and evidently by his own servant. He is arrested, nay justly, on such suspicions, and the leagued traitors of the country, all in sympathy with his sufferings, rise to rescue him; and so doing another valuable life is lost, not to mention the numbers of the deluded men themselves, that perished. Gentlemen, the complicity of the prisoner in the guilt of Murtagh has been sworn to by at least two credible witnesses, and corroborated

by the evidence of almost all the rest that you have heard : it is for you to decide, after hearing the prisoner's defence, how far the case has been made out against him. For his own part, the lawyer was sorry to say he had no doubt on the subject: however, it was a case that commanded theirs, the jury's, most attentive consideration, from the enormity of the crime, as well as from the youth and respectability of the parties implicated in the novel, but, he feared, now generally-spread crime of treason.

The defence of the prisoner, for it soon became evident that a verdict could be found but against the younger, was, in the first place, a simple confession of the truth of the accident, by which he had been first introduced amidst the gang. His return had been occasioned, it was pleaded, by a mere wish to revisit his parents, and to breathe the reviving air of his native place, after a long confinement. Mr. Roderick Plunket gave evidence respecting the duel, of which, but justly, he took the entire blame upon himself; assuring the lawyers, with an oath, that they and the judge himself were

a more sanguinary set, by G—! a thousand times, than the prisoner, who was a mild and gentle youth, and not the worse shot for all that. All knowledge of Murtagh's purposes was of course denied, as well as any intimacy of the kind on the part of the prisoner with his servant. An *alibi*, as far as it could be proved, was established by the domestics of the Grange as to their young master having retired to his bed on All-Hallow's-Eve before the time that he was represented, by one of the witnesses, as entering the public-house of Tim Oulaghan. But his retiring thus early seemed to many but to establish further the allegation advanced. With respect to his conduct during the attack on Plunketstown-house, he appealed to Major Hempenshaugh himself and his Peelers, if any one could have acted more loyally on the emergency. Notwithstanding all this, the evidence of the suborned witnesses still remained unshaken. Arthur had been extremely unwilling to mention the proffers or menaces of the Jesuit, which he knew would lead him so far in confession respecting the rebel committees and

their plans, as to render his stay in the county afterwards impossible. For this reason he had not even mentioned the circumstance to his lawyer, except vaguely—merely acquainting him that he had some very bitter enemies, who were likely to carry their vindictiveness so far as to produce false evidence against him.

The case was closing, and the situation of Arthur Dillon seemed perilous. This was evinced by the general anxiety of all present; by the lingering pleas of the lawyer, scrupulous that not an iota in his favour should be slurred over; and by that peculiar look of affected indecision that jurymen assume, as they really approach decision. The young prisoner at the bar became himself extremely agitated; and he regretted mortally not having disclosed, in time, all relating to the machinations of the Jesuit, that they might have been combated by the same weapons, or exposed;—but now all resolution seemed too late. The feelings of the son may be judged; those of the parent could not—he saw his child, the hope of his family, ready to be snatched from him, and to such a fate!

Yet he said nothing, balancing restlessly from foot to foot, with an expression of countenance that Garrick or Davide might have studied, if either of those artists were really possessed of the heartless devotion to their art attributed to them.

Mr. Crostwhaite was in court, watching the event of a trial in which he felt his character implicated, as well as the life of the Dillons. And for him, the cause of the accusation prospered, even beyond his utmost hopes. Arthur marked his ill-omened countenance, watching his pangs and enjoying his fate. He turned his eyes on the other side, and there stood another minister of another religion—the Jesuit, enjoying, though with no such external signs as the curate could not hide, the success of his machinations. Arthur's agitation was extreme; he thought to apostrophise the Jesuit in open court, but perceived that the malignant personage had disappeared. Crostwhaite, too, having whispered with some of the lawyers, and received from them the certainty of Arthur Dillon's condemnation, left the court. He had

promised to ride off, the moment that the event of the trial became manifest, to Castle Belville, whither his patron had retired, for some purpose or affairs, from the assizes.

At this critical moment, when all seemed decided, a slip of paper was put into the prisoner's hand from some one in the crowd. The following words were written on it :

"If you are sure of being quitted, master, make a wee bit of a laugh or smile ; if you beant, put your hand over your eyes."

Arthur was bewildered : he had some wild and confused idea of what this meant, and from whence it came. He guessed that another life might be jeopardied for him, and his impulse was to prevent this, by obeying the signal of the smile. In his confusion he did both ;—his hand rose involuntarily to his brow, to conceal his emotion, and it had the more important effect of concealing his smile, and obeying the other signal desired. At the moment his lawyer was tapped on the shoulder, and interrupted almost at the last sentence of his defence :—a

slip of paper was put into his hands also. He paused for a few minutes, perusing it attentively; whilst the eyes and attention of the whole court were directed on him and on the prisoner, to discover what these mysterious intimations would produce. The lawyer addressed the judge; it was to stay the court for a few minutes,—he himself occupying the time by dwelling on some minor points of the defence. A bustle was soon heard at the entry of the court-house, and the exclamations as of some clearing their way with difficulty through the crowd. The moment it was seen within who entered, he was hailed, by the lower orders that thronged the court, with the most mixed feelings of exulting and commiseration mingled, expressed by sounds betwixt groans and shouts. Through the crowd eight men made their way, bearing a litter, which they placed, unbidden, on the green table before the court—on it was seated Murtagh Fallon.

“I’m the murderer! your lordship’s worship,” cried the deformed, emaciated figure, clapping his hands together, and endeavouring

to rise with all the vigour he was capable of, "I'm the murderer of th' informer Blaney! —there's the hand that did it—and here's the head that planned it all itself, barrin' what poor O'Rourke, rest his soul! that's gone, put me up to. And as to them fellows, that have been here swearing away the-life of a young gentleman that never trod on worm, it's all big black lies, as true as your Lordship's sated there. Master Arthur's as clane of heart or hand in it, as the child that 'll be born at Christmas. Then stay, your worship, afore you be passin' any sintence or the like, I'll tell yees all, and how it was, and where it was. I'm the man to try, and to hang—och! it's myself that deserves it, and that well, for bringin' trouble and the black gallows before my master's son."

"The appearance of this man, I submit it to your Lordship," said Macnally, "will alter the case materially."

His Lordship nodded.

CHAPTER XXI.

LUCY's sufferings, during this dreadful succession of events, must have occurred ere this to the least interested reader. The image of her murdered parent long occupied her thoughts, to the exclusion of almost every other idea; and if an unworthy feeling, as she deemed it at such a time, of anxiety for her lover's fate intruded, it was banished indignantly from her bosom. Such feelings, however, would recur, and were at last received; they were often even introduced by Honoria, who thought them, sad as they were, a relief from the more harrowing images of the late dreadful scene. But the best cure for sorrow is, to allow it free and ample flow, and all the art of consoling friendship is in vain applied to hasten its

dissipation; like a stream, it must rise to a torrent, when its sources overflow,—its own violence being its own best remedy and solace. For a friend, who is called away with many warnings and after pining long, the first moments of grief are black and sullen, rising not till after a time into open bursts of grief; but such a sudden catastrophe as that which had visited poor Lucy, calls sorrow forth at once in its extreme; and if the nerves crack not at being strained to such a pitch, the worst part of grief is spent at first. The dark, calm stupor, the merely heavy, but unsuffering consciousness of the loss succeeds; and after a time the heart resumes its wonted beat, the face its wonted smile, and the grave just covered over breaks not the level of the course of life.

Whatever were the feelings of the young friends, they enjoyed at least the happiness at Inchfearris of being shut out from the eye of curiosity, without being exactly shut up. The narrow precincts of the island were confined to their footsteps, and were consecrated to their predominant feelings; the business of every-

day life did not there jar with their mood; and it was easy to interdict the appearance of even a smile within such a circumscribed space. In such a situation grief soon satisfies itself, and wears away faster than even in the midst of the world's crowd and dissipation. Lucy's countenance still wore the grave look of mourning, when her thoughts became anxious for the living;—the first and the second smile were perhaps repressed; but the third, like a struggling sunrise, carried the day, and succeeded in overspreading and lighting up the face of Lucy. Honoria then ventured on a jest; her friend scrupled not to re-echo it. Even Travers himself ceased to look grave; and the domestics no longer kept down their grins and songs on the first appearance of Miss Plunket. Melancholy for the past was cleared up, and bodings for the future were less black and oppressive for having been preceded by sorrow.

As far as they respected Arthur Dillon, the anxieties of the young friends were not excited without reason: his danger and sufferings awoke and firmly rooted all Lucy's affec-

tions for him; and the most desolate of his prison hours would have been changed to gladness, could he have known the deep interest that at that very time filled the bosom of his mistress. Day after day brought various and conflicting accounts to Inchfearris—that the accusation was nothing, that it could not be supported;—again, that it was seconded by fearful proof—that the late murders cried for vengeance, not on the deluded peasants, the mere tools of designing men, but on those educated and better order of the disaffected, that were the main-springs of all this commotion. At length came the assizes; and reports grew more magnified and portentous as the day that was to decide Arthur's fate approached. The judge's speech was terrific, as he opened the 'sises, told one report,—he threatened to hang every prisoner that was brought before him!—and Lucy almost gave credence to the horrid tale. Distorted accounts, too, in country and city newspapers, at times, met their eyes;—Orange exultations over the spilling of the Dillon blood, and premature lamentations, perhaps from

some wailing writer of the opposite party, on youth betrayed, and the noble blood of the land sold, as the eloquent gazetteer expressed himself, by the informing carcase-butchers, at the shambles of Orange corruption.

The execution of O'Rourke, so near them, was a shocking reality to enhance this fearful imagining. The avenging judges, and their train, their judgement, and the appalling execution, hung like a night-mare over the whole county; every peasant slunk to his work or to his cabin with downcast looks, and seemed in every bush to descry a gallows. All mirth and jollity were suspended; and the village gossips, during their cessation, feasted, indeed far more deliciously, on such tales of interest as the Newgate Calendar abounds in. Whilst this vague and general apprehension shook the whole county, how must Lucy have been agitated by the particular cause of her anxiety!

"Now, even now, Honoria, he is on his trial," said Lucy, springing to the window, that from the lake commanded a distant view of the

road from the assize town, but not a form that could be fancied a messenger was seen to traverse it;—"what a horrid, gloomy day! Honoria—I can bear this close room no longer; come out, do come out." And she ran forth to inhale the breeze.

"My dear Lucy," said Honoria, forcing a bonnet on her friend's head, and a cloak around her, "do not be so agitated. We know him innocent, and Heaven will protect him!"

"I particularly wrote to Uncle Roderick to send a messenger every hour, and he does not."

"Of what use to harass you with uncertain news? The tidings of final acquittal will be sufficient."

"Yes! if they were come, Norah; but they won't, I know they won't, and I shall never outlive any other."

As she spoke, a horseman was seen to urge his steed along the road, which they were observing, towards Rathfinnan; but it was too distant to allow of any certainty as to the person.

"There is one certainly just returned from Mullingar," said Lucy; "dear Honoria, let us

send some one ashore to meet and question him."

"Nay," replied Honoria; "my father is gone to Rathfinnan this day, for the very purpose of gathering the first tidings; he will infallibly meet this new comer, and must now return soon, for it is close upon dinner-hour. Heaven send good news! If you are thus agitated in doubts of the worst, what will become of you in the reality?"

"I know not, Norah;—I am more than in doubt, and feel it a most heavy certainty upon my heart. I shall die—I am determined to die if he does! This terrible island,—there is no getting to it or from it, or hearing or knowing any thing for an age after the rest of the world;—what could have brought me to it?"

Honoria smiled.

"Yes! 'twas our friendship,—forgive me, Norah,—I am glad to be here; but let us be rowed ashore instantly. I cannot abide the suspense,—indeed I can't."

"Patience now, my dear Lucy, there is a boat putting out from the Cove;—it is my

father's, I know it. It will be here in five minutes. Come let's walk round the island till he arrives; he will be here by the time that we have made the circuit."

Honorina dragged away Lucy, who quitted unwillingly, even for a moment, the view of the boat; and the two, in silence and heart-heaving, made the circuit of the island. When the boat appeared again to their sight, it neared its destination, and held two astern,—Mr. Travers, and some one he had brought with him; most likely the horseman that had attracted the regards of the fair lookers-out. Such it was, in truth,—being no other than Abraham Crost-whaite; who, finding his stomach unlikely to hold out patiently until his arrival at Castle Belville, had willingly accepted Mr. Travers's invitation to him, to take, in passing, and while his steed was refreshing, a hasty meal with him at Inchfearris. Lucy recognised, even at a distance, his sable garb and ill-omened spencer.

"'Tis all over, Norah!" cried the young lady; "that messenger could bring no tidings but the worst."

“Bear up, Lucy; betray not your weakness at least to him.”

The gentlemen landed; Mr. Crostwhaite springing ashore with an agility that betokened good humour and high spirits, which he further evinced by a gallant salute on approaching the young ladies. Honoria welcomed the Curate with courtesy, and led the way to the cottage, leaving Lucy to the support of Mr. Travers’s arm.

“Did you hear any thing of the Dillons, Sir?” she ventured to ask the latter.

“Nothing decided yet, my dear girl,” was the reply. “But I trust, that with the help of God, they’ll get off.”

On entering, Lucy sunk upon a seat, unable to question the messenger she had been so anxious to meet; but hoping and fearing that his loquacity would of itself convey the desired information. The table was prepared in the one room of the cottage; and Mr. Crostwhaite was employed cracking his knuckles for some time, in expectation of the viands; at length

the thoughts with which his mind was full, burst forth :—

“ Why don’t you attend assizes, Travers ? ”

“ What should I do there ? ”

“ As much as myself ; — why not ? The finest eating and drinking in Westmeath—if you care for that, and the pleasantest fellows ; those lawyers are full of fun and friendship, for all their bickerings in court.”

“ I do not envy them the mirth,” said Travers, “ that overlays insensibility.”

“ Insensibility ! to what ? Is it to the sufferings of criminals, and the fate of convicts ? Egad ! I pity the unfortunate myself ; but as to any commiseration for such fellows, I never heard of any who had ; — that would be a little too much of the Samaritan, I thank ye.”

“ No doubt—you’re used to these sort of things, Mr. Crostwhaite ; — but, soldier as I have been, I own, I cannot stand it.”

“ And yet,” said Crostwhaite, affecting a countenance of the commiseration he had just been mocking, “ there are instances, that a

magistrate, ever so much inspired with the desire of his country's peace, cannot look on unmoved. Our neighbours there—the poor Dillons, for example, that are so dreadfully involved ——”

“ But there can be no fear of their getting off at last ?” asked Honoria.

“ Not the least chance in life of their escaping,” said the Curate, pressing his lips together, and stretching out his arms, as after an irrefragable dictum.

“ Nay, don't speak so certain,” said Travers.

“ I only tell you the opinion of the whole court—that of the lawyers on both sides ;—I would not have come away, in fact, had all not been, I may say, decided. I had promised Castletown Belville to wait, indeed, till then. Of the father, certainly there is no fear ; but all the powers on earth can't save the son.”

Lucy Plunket arose from her seat, and walked steadily out of the room. Honoria followed her in a few minutes, but instantly returned. Dinner was served, and Lucy re-entered, bearing to a superficial observer no

signs whatever of agitation,—there was at times a distraction, an unusual play of muscle about the throat, but nothing to attract attention in a young lady whose place it was to be silent. The suffering, the fearful struggle within was not suppressed, but suspended; and though not concealed by that fearful overflow of spirits, so inimitably portrayed on such an occasion by the author of “Matthew Wald,” to cover such agitation by an even calm, was perhaps a more difficult task than to take advantage of its excitement, and convert it into the effervescence of fly-away spirits.

Dinner passed; Mr. Crosswhite took his departure, to convey the tidings with which he was fraught to Castle Belville; and Mr. Travers became occupied in some of his many kill-time occupations. As soon as the young friends were alone, Lucy started up from her assumed calm:—

“Honoraria, I am resolved to go to Mullingar, —will you accompany me?”

“To Mullingar!—you!—why?—how? Are you mad?”

“ Yes ! to Mullingar, and this instant.”

“ But consider, what will be said—thought of us ? besides, how are we to go ?”

“ Means are easily found,—to go I am resolved,—will you accompany me ?”

Honorina combated, by every means in her power, the rash and sudden resolution of her friend ; but Lucy was determined, and not the less so, because she could not assign any sufficient cause, or any advantage to be gained by her going. But to rest still, she felt impossible ; she would see her lover once more at least, and to attain that in the regular path of decorum she could not hope. Honorina, however, prevailed so far over her, as to make her defer their journey till the next morning, when they could set out at a very early hour ; and by anticipating the dawn, arrive at the assize-town betimes. Lucy’s nurse, on whom she could depend, lived within a short distance of the town ; and in her humble cabin did the young ladies determine to take refuge.

“ I will go with you,” said Honorina ; “ but remember, we are braving the world’s opinion.”

“The world’s opinion!—put up that eternal bugbear of your prudence, Norah; ’tis vain;—for the only thing that bears me up against the horrors of this moment, is the thought of all that I am about to brave—that I may see him once more.”

Daylight had scarcely yet succeeded in distinguishing Inchfearris from the surrounding lake; when a boat put forth from it for the mainland. There the fair travellers disembarking, mounted a common car, rendered comfortable for their reception by a feather-bed and quilt; and therein, wrapped in scarlet cloak and hood, according to the fashion of the female peasantry of the country, they trotted on as briskly as the willing Jack Beahan could make his horse advance. To quiet Mr. Travers, word was left at Inchfearris that the ladies had gone to Plunketstown, and would perhaps pass the day there; and, as he was accustomed to wilder and further flights on their parts, they had no need of being uneasy with the thoughts of his anxiety.

Little passed worthy of remark during their

journey, Jack Beahan being strictly ordered to join converse with no passenger on any account: once that he did venture a question respecting the news from the 'sises, the questioned, instead of informing Jack's curiosity, began to jest upon the muffled forms and faces of his freight,—and his tongue was henceforward sealed up from idle questioning. It was about the middle hour of the day when they approached Mullingar, and caught a view of its lake, smaller considerably than that they were accustomed to call their own, but perhaps more beautiful from surrounding country-seats, and ornamented islands. For our anxious travellers, however, scenery had no charms: and the countenances of passengers journeying home from the assizes, as they sought to read in them a confirmation either of their hopes or fears, were objects more interesting than even that landscape. They arrived at the cottage of Lucy's nurse near the town, there dismounted from their humble vehicle, and were welcomed by the old dame with a world of *mushas* and *agras*, and save your pretty faces! which with great

difficulty the young ladies at length escaped from; and, still mantled in their cloaks and hoods, set off on foot into the town.

With palpitating heart, and uncertain whither her steps were directed, Lucy entered the suburbs. Tidings of one kind or other seemed to be flying from mouth to mouth; although, from the cant terms in which they were expressed, she could never wholly catch the import. In the crowded and more noisy street less was to be heard or ascertained; and the young ladies, in spite of their lowly disguise, trembled to find themselves in the mingled throng;—they had not only to avoid the impertinent familiarity of those who in garb seemed their equals, but the stare of the young lawyer, the leer of the old, and the amazement of the better order of country-folk on seeing two such figures that they ought to know and did not.

“What are yees lookin’ aghter, my darlints?” cried a loungee, in a frieze-coat, that wanted to be witty.

Scarcely escaped from him, when a legal dandy cries out, “What a nice pair of legs!”

and when the attention of the young ladies was called to remedy this discovery which the dandy had not made, their faces were unveiled, and the dandy, with a compliment, chuckled at the success of his joke.

Lucy and Honoria both wished themselves at Inchfearris;—they seemed not in the least nearer to ascertaining the fate of Arthur. Every thing conspired to fret and disturb them. “Is it for your Joe ye’re a lookin’, girls?” cried another wag; “he that’s up afore the big wigs? Troth, then content you, it’s not to a himpin collar, but only to Botany he’s goin’.” This chance remark struck Lucy as if they had been discovered; and it required all Honoria’s fortitude to keep her friend up. They had advanced to no very great distance from the court-house, which now seemed at once to disgorge its crowd, that overflowed the street, full of bustle and agitation. There was even a partial shouting which seemed a good omen; and as each client or acquaintance met his lawyer, there was the cordial grasp of congratulation, or the shake of the head and cast

up of the eyes, that told the fate of some unfortunate. The young ladies found it impossible to stem the torrent that flowed towards them, and they retreated before it; turning round, however, every now and then, and endeavouring to discover, by gazing, what they had come from so far to ascertain, yet afraid to ask it of any one of the throng that surrounded them.

“There’s a pair of nice-stepping jades,” said a well-known voice behind them.

They both turned on the instant, and started, as did the speaker. It was Roderick, and leaning on his arm was Arthur Dillon.

“Very happy to see you, Miss Plunket,” said Roderick, taking hold of his trembling niece, and supporting her; “and you, Miss Travers, equally welcome to Mullingar. Luckily, here are my lodgings!—come, bundle up, all of ye, and let us have no scenes in the street. By G—! as it is, the Embellishers will talk of nothing else for a week to come.”

“And you have escaped, Arthur?” said Lucy, as she entered the room, and flung

herself down, not attempting to conceal her past anxiety and interest.

"I have, dearest Lucy, I have!" said our hero, as he seized the unwithdrawn hand of his mistress, and kissed it eagerly; "do I wake from prison, and to this!"

Roderick entered, followed by Mr. Dillon; and a few minutes passed in hearty and sincere congratulations. A messenger was forthwith despatched to Inchfearris, to allay any anxiety that the absence of the young ladies might occasion to the worthy Travers.

A cheerful dinner was soon concluded; and when it was taken away, Roderick turned to the young ladies, and asked them at last, in his own blunt manner, "what the devil brought them to Mullingar?"

Lucy crimsoned and looked grave. Roderick smiled, and even the eyes of Luke Dillon himself began to open on the enigma that had long puzzled him.

"I tell you what, young ladies," continued Roderick, "this is a much more serious business than you dream of;—but, for the present,

since we all are met in joy for our young friend's escape, we will not disturb the meeting with unpleasantness. Remember, Lucy, however, that I stand in your poor father's place, and command your obedience, as he did, by law as well as relationship. You will not find me a severe fellow in thwarting you, Lucy; but there are other things to be minded in this world besides young ladies' whims."

Lucy answered not, but took an early opportunity of retiring with her friend Honoria.

"So, Mr. Arthur, you have stolen the affections of my niece completely. Pray, may I ask what are your intentions?"

Arthur had none in the world upon the subject, his wishes having never dared to take the solid shape of an intention.

"Do you intend to snap up the girl, or run away with her, and live on her fifteen thousand pounds?"

"No, Sir!"

"Acquaint me, then, with your intentions—I may second them."

Arthur was silent; *dumb-founded*, as Ro-

derick would have said ; and that gentleman turned the conversation. After an half-hour's wandering through other topics, he asked Mr. Dillon, " if he knew Ardtraghin ?"

" Is it the town" (he meant land) " at my own door, joining the Grange ? Ay, every acre of it do I know, as well as the rug of my own hearth."

" What it is worth an acre ?"

" Five guineas to any tenant," was the reply.

" Suppose 'twas let at three,—rents are growing insecure, and I prefer the low and the certain to a high-sounding and rotten income."

" Suppose,—afore Gad ! it would be worth nigh two hundred a-year to any man."

" Would you like to have it yourself ?"

" I am poor, Mr. Plunket, but not in a condition to receive such compliments as these."

" Then you shall not have it. Arthur shall, and you will oversee it for him ; while, by its assistance, he goes to the bar, and works himself to fame and affluence. Nay, no words, my old antagonist ! I owe you a bigger blow for lodging only one pistol-bullet in my midriff ; a com-

pliment, by ——, man never paid me before. And hark ye! Lucy Plunket is eighteen, and, consequently, for three years under my controul:—for those three years you shall see as little of her as possible; moreover, she shall be in society, surrounded by and introduced to young men of rank and fortune, that suit her better than the choice she has made. If, with all this, she still keeps her mind, Roderick has nothing more to do than give you an uncle's hand in three years' time; all this with a proviso—start not at the word! 'tis not the old one,—that you deal in no soft nonsense, nor trash, nor letters; but let Lucy bide out her probation in quietness.”

Arthur could have sunk on his knees before his benefactor, whom he considered as such, not the less for his resolution never to avail himself of the profits of Ardtraghin. His father leaned back in his chair, stupified by the sudden alteration from evil to good fortune. As to Roderick, he hastily swallowed another tumbler, and went whistling to bed.

CHAPTER XXII.

FOR the present, Arthur Dillon was interrupted in his contemplations of future happiness, now certain at least to the sanguine thoughts of a lover, by the fate of the unfortunate Murtagh, whose first crime, as well as this his last self-sacrifice, was the consequence of devoted attachment to his masters. He had been condemned to suffer the last penalty of the law, from which his timely surrender had alone, in all probability, saved Arthur. There was no hope of saving him; nothing left to be done, except as far as the horrors of his certain fate might be alleviated, and the comfortable reliance on his superstitious creed effected this for the criminal, beyond all the powers of friendly consolation. Arthur visited him in

his cell, and found him "contint to die for his masters, and the good cause, sure!" As to the murder, it was the misguided wretch's glory; and all expostulations on this point were thrown away upon him. There, too, Arthur met the Jesuit, who saluted him with his usual reverence of humility, and a countenance seemingly unmindful of all that had happened. To this spiritual director did our hero abandon, with a sigh, his unfortunate follower.

Vain it would be to paint the relief and happiness that visited the Grange once more, on the suddenness and content with which Mrs. Dillon relapsed from the anxious and commanding female into the quiet housewife:—the grateful feelings of joy, with which Luke Dillon breathed once more "his own air on his own ground," marked the boundaries and examined the soil of Ardtraghin—or the fevered mood of promise and resolution in which Arthur formed his plans of raising himself to a level with his mistress. Lucy he had one long interview with at Inchfearris, for that abode she still preferred to adopt, till time should

wear away the freshness of the catastrophe of Plunketstown, and allow her and Aunt Bridget to reside there once more. What passed in the interview between the lovers, I must leave my readers to imagine : tears, no doubt, and vows were shed and offered in abundance ; and the passionate fears for their mutual fidelity silenced by a solemn betrothal.

In his refusal to derive any benefit from Ardtraghin, Arthur was positive, and angered Luke more than once by his obstinacy on that point. " What are you to do ? " said Luke. Arthur answered nothing, and, in truth, could answer nothing. And this proud indigence long continued to oppress him, even after he had betaken himself to the metropolis, and devoted his whole days to the study of his profession. In pursuit of this, it became necessary for him to visit London, in order that he might eat certain dinners there, to which it would be much more convenient, and all as instructive for young Irish students, if they could send an apology. But, as the worshipful Benchers admit of no such slight, Arthur Dil-

Ion did cross the Channel to his dinner in the English metropolis, and chanced to arrive there at the time, when that Babel of all seasons was a verier Babel than ever. In short, it was the time when Kings and Emperors thronged the streets,—when it rained Counts and Princes, and when not a tavern or billiard-table was accessible for barons of the Holy Roman Empire. Dining one day, at the house of some distant relative of the family, Arthur was peculiarly struck by the martial form and features of a foreign veteran opposite to him—foreign, he seemed, as such, at least, his white Austrian uniform bespoke him. As the viands disappeared in silence beneath the veteran's over-hanging mustachios, our hero eyed him with interest. The foreign mien and uniform was novel to him, and attractive. The officer, at length, took notice of the youth's attention, and bent upon him a glance of his keen grey eyes from underneath a pair of eyebrows that might have been mistaken for a second tier of mustachios. At the moment, the veteran was challenged to a glass of wine, under the title

of General Dillon. Arthur started — and started yet more, when the General, opening his mouth, with German rotundity, uttered a few syllables in as sweet and as native a brogue, as if he had never wandered a mile from the Shannon.

Without the least interested view, Arthur made himself known in the course of the evening to General Dillon; and the old man instantly put on second youth, thus alighting on a nephew, as it happened. He flung aside at once forty years of his existence; forgot his stars, his rank, and foreign service, and could speak of nothing but the days when he trod the bogs, barelegged, campaigning against the wild fowl as eagerly as he had since done against the French. The old bachelor, who had retired, or was about to retire, from his service, with a full sum of savings, fastened on Arthur at once, laid violent hands on him, would not live without him, in short, and prepared to return with him to Ireland. In the course of their journey, he came easily at the inside of all Arthur's secrets, commended his stern self-

denial with respect to Ardtraghin, and swore *donnerwetter*, he should not want the same help from his own blood and kin ! And the veteran was as good as his word. Arthur despatched his uncle to the Grange ; where his little flock of nephews and nieces ran from him as an ogre ; and even Luke welcomed his brother with the beard, with something of awe. A few days, however, converted all this terror into a love as much in the extreme ; and General Maurice Dillon became domiciliated at the Grange, looked up to even by Roderick Plunket, and was long considered the most revered and esteemed lion of the county.

All the world had foretold that, in a very few years, the wild Roderick would see the end of the Plunketstown property ; but there are frequently germs of prudence, in such wild characters, that shoot up at the proper season, and which seldom, or never start up to check the career, or interrupt the ruin, of the sedate and solemn spendthrift. Roderick, in fact, pulled in ; hunted with the club-hounds, paid off his wine-merchant, and regaled his guests,

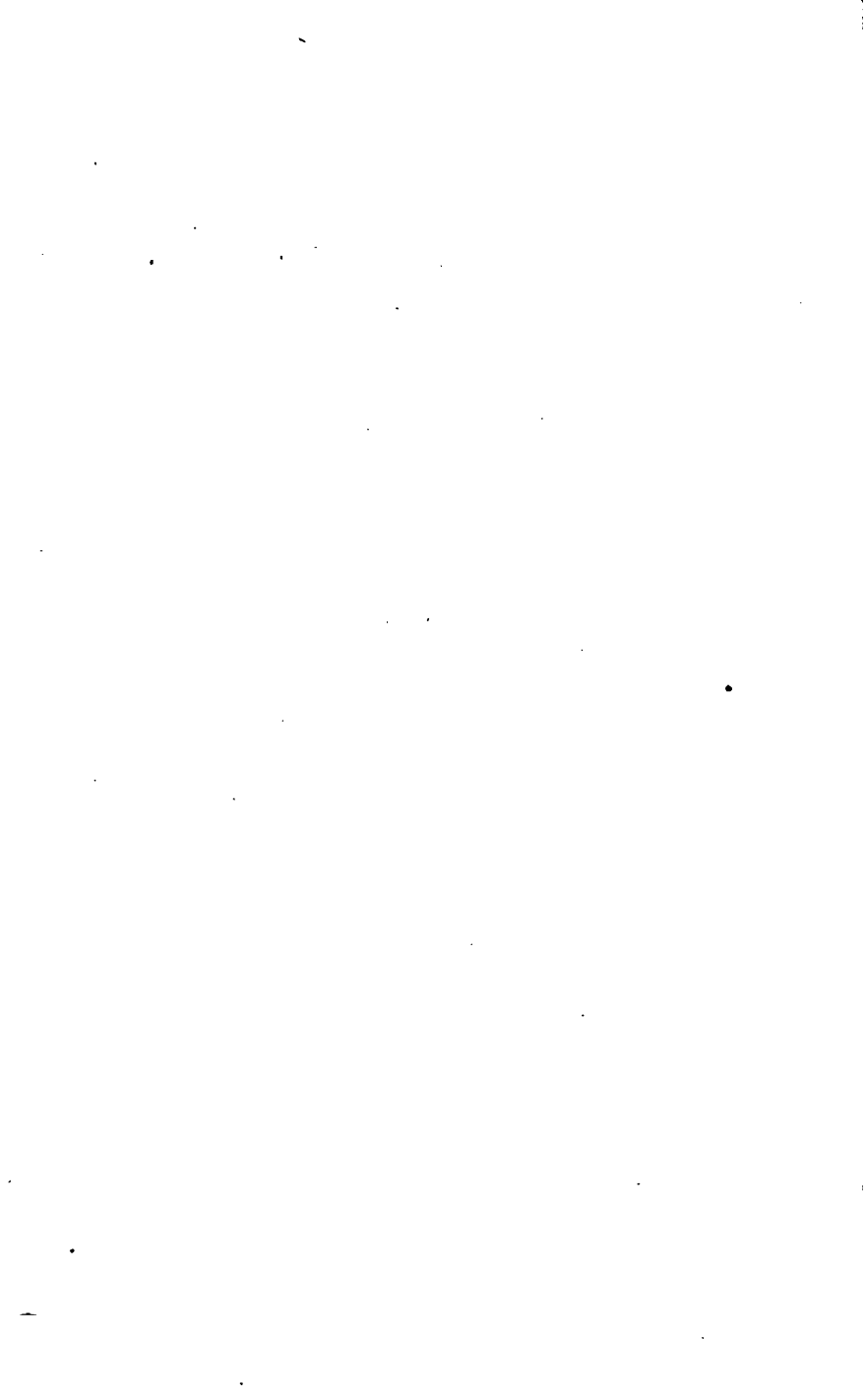
all as choice and noble as his brothers had been, with plain whiskey. He obtained from this conduct, very soon, the character exactly opposite to what had formerly been attributed to him; and was looked upon as a keen fellow, one, moreover, on the look-out for a rich wife. And young ladies of birth and bearing, (i. e. the purse they bore,) entitled to become mistresses of Plunketstown, were not concealed or kept in the back-ground from Roderick. Still the new squire was difficult to please; and of all the flying reports of his speedy change of state, it so happened that none ever reached fulfilment. His eye of predilection had long been, and still was, on Honoria; but, bold as Roderick was, he feared most, of all things, to be thought a downright fool. And no less a character, he knew, was to be acquired in the country from such a marriage. Still his barge ran ashore at Inchfearris, five days out of the seven; and latterly, after that he scanned all the beauties of military and assize balls, and found no metal more attractive there, his visits were seven in the seven. At last they became

evening visits, and superseded the bottle. The hostile spy-glasses of more than twenty country seats soon made a discovery of this assiduity: it was noised about; Roderick bore the jokes and innuendos on the subject better than he himself could have expected,—took courage in consequence, and, one bright summer's evening, made an offer of his heart and hand to the island maiden.

This taming of the wild Roderick down to matrimony, and to the exact and humble match, took more than a couple of years to effect, and its *denouement* coincided marvellously with the conclusion of Lucy's probation, through which long period our heroine had sighed constant and true. A double wedding was the inevitable consequence, and both took place with all the overflowing gladness and riotous glee of happy Irish hearts. General Maurice Dillon kissed both brides,—if not with his lips, at least with his mustachios. The Grange was too happy to hold its army of inhabitants; and the Dillon tribe alone formed an escort to the bridal party, that might have defied an army of Rapparees.

Honoria still lives the hospitable mistress of Plunketstown; while her friend Lucy, transported to the metropolis as the wife of an independent, professional gentleman, graces its first circles. Our friend Arthur bids fair to fill the first situations of the State, whither his talents may call him, now that the liberal feeling of England tends to do away with those obstructions, that perhaps the wise precaution of our ancestors placed as defences against a dreaded creed, and that the equally wise forbearance of to-day may remove as invidious and unneeded.

CONNEMARA.



CONNEMARA.

CHAPTER I.

It was upon a beautiful summer's morning, in one of those halcyon years when Ireland has a summer, that a tall-masted shallop, with more sail than hull, and with a very plentiful cargo of queasiness on board, entered the bay of Dublin,—that boasted scene, what tourist has left undescribed, or what son of Erin mentions it without an immediate comparison between it and the bay of Naples? As no two places, however, on the earth's surface are more unlike, we shall spend no time in comparing them; but depict, such as it is, our opening scene. To the right of the vessel arose the

hill of Howth;—a pretty hill, wanting but height, outline, wood, or cultivation, to render it a very beautiful object indeed. Across the isthmus that unites it to the city, the view extended—extended certainly, for there was not either hill, or village, or variety, to obstruct its range over the bleak flat. The visitor who had formed a preconceived idea from the mention of Naples, would have hoped to see the proud metropolis of Ireland rearing itself at the extremity of the bay which it commanded, up and upon the ascent of an eminence, attracting by its white walls the eye of the mariner from afar, and seeming to lord the ocean from whose brink it rose. There is nothing, however, of all this: Dublin is sunk in the lowest possible level, and is hidden from the distant eye, as much by its situation as by its hovering canopy of fog and smoke. On near scrutiny, a few steeples are seen to peep forth, and designate the city they adorn; and, if it were not for these, and for the few masts that congregate in her river for the purposes of a scanty commerce, the discovery ships of

China, if we can imagine the Celestial Empire to undertake such an enterprise, might visit the bay, without entertaining any suspicion of a city lurking at its extremity.

So much in revenge for the audacious and hackneyed comparison between this bay and Naples. By itself the southern shore of Dublin gulph is far superior, and altogether different in its kind from any scene that either Naples or Italy has to boast. The wide extent of a richly adorned and inhabited country; its dark groves interspersed with shining villages and villas, rising gradually from the beach and sea, that form its foreground; and bounded, behind and afar, by a most noble chain of mountains, contrasting their sterility with its richness, and their rugged outline with its green sinuosities, forms of itself one of the finest landscapes in the world. But, in speaking of the collective beauty of the bay, the less allusion that is made to that of Naples will be for the better.

The passengers, for the vessel in question was simply a packet-boat, consisted of the

general kind and proportion of Irish live imports:—members of parliament from their garrets in Fludyer-street, and Great Suffolk-street, hurrying home, after the late dissolution, to be, if possible, re-elected; law-students from their dinners; pig-drivers returning from selling their lean stock to English fatness; a pair of English country-tradesmen, lately metamorphosed into English militia-officers, coming to join their corps in Ireland, not a little strange and proud of their military foraging-caps; with the usual complement of sick ladies and gentlemen. There was one passenger, in particular, deserving of notice, most obnoxious to the rest; so much so, that, had his presence been known generally on board previous to sailing, few would have put to sea in such company. This was no other than the mortal remains of Lord Manvers, as the mourning domestics attendant on the coffin declared,—a young Irish nobleman lately deceased, and now returning to the family-vault of his ancestors. The oblong tenement of death, at first concealed beneath a piece of sail-cloth, had been, in the course of the

voyage, laid out with all honour upon the deck, abhorred by its fellow-passengers, and shunned even by the sailors, who were paid an enormous sum for thus acting Charons over the English channel.

“Manvers! Manvers! Manvers!” muttered an old gentleman, seated on deck, and recovering a little from the manifest discomposure of his stomach;—“I can’t say I recollect that name in the peerage.”

The domestic of his late lordship seemed much inclined to reply to this ejaculation, but he checked himself for some reason or other; perhaps he thought an altercation of the kind might not become the mournful haviour of his visage:—and certainly he did look most intensely lugubrious! He was an immense, stout, broad-shouldered valet as ever had filled up, with the roast-beef of old England, a skin born but to the slender nutrition of potatoes. By extending and ruddying his cheeks, this his good condition increased much the width and good humour of his grin:—the face of the fellow had been Englified by fulness and expan-

sion; yet the humour of the Irishman still lurked in the few crannies of his countenance that his fatness had left, and redeemed it from the mere pinguitude of expression that beams unmingled with aught deeper than honest good humour in the countenance of John Bull. This visage composed to decorous dolour, looked the ludicrous itself; and his appearance did not contradict what his countenance betrayed. His nether garments were of no mourning hue, yet his hat was enveloped by an enormous crape, and his coat was evidently part of a mourning suit, though, how he could have got into it was matter of surprise:—by a dint of stretching, that its thread-bare texture seemed likely not long to allow, it spanned his shoulders, doing them little justice, holding his arms back in a pinioned attitude, leaving his huge wrist-bones uncovered; its shoulder-knots in his ears; and altogether giving him the appearance of a plucked as well as of a pinioned fowl.

As the old gentleman continued his “Manvers! Manvers!” the domestic grew impatient.

“By my soul, I’ll give him something else to think of!” remarked he to his comrade as he moved to the further end of the ship. The means Barney, for such was his name, put in practice to give the old gentleman something else to think of, soon became evident. The fellow had procured some slices of bacon, and was busied frying them in the forepart of the ship, to the deadly annoyance of every passenger, whose stomachs took new qualms at the unwelcome odour that steamed from Barney’s unrelenting cookery to their nostrils. They protested, and Barney concluded by devouring his bacon: but the point was gained; and the old gentleman was thenceforward too much occupied by the fresh uneasiness of his stomach to trouble the sable-clad domestic by any more of his incredulity.

The vessel, in the mean time, neared the Pigeon-House; and its approach attracted at once to the quay all the population of that artificial peninsula:—idlers, porters, boatmen, and custom-house-officers; whilst a flock of cars and jingles, for they looked in gait and

appearance more like huge ragged birds than like Christian vehicles, fluttered to the spot, and kept hovering round. The live passengers were soon landed and carried off, many per force, by those vulture-like vehicles we have described; and the remains of the late Lord Manvers were at last slung ashore with some difficulty. A proper hearse was in readiness, and thither Barney and his friends were preparing to bear their late master; when the gentlemen of the custom-house, who seemed to have less reverence for the dead than even for the living, interfered, and declared not only their right, but their determination, to pry into the coffin, lest it might contain contraband goods. Loudly did Barney protest against the sacrilege; but the gentlemen of the revenue were, as usual, politely obstinate on the point, and the coffin was borne in for examination.

“Any how, Mr. Rasberry; you wouldn’t be uncovering my master, rest his soul! afore these spalpeens, to be makin’ a show of him?” said Barney.

“Certainly not, my good fellow! We’ll take

a quiet and decent peep at the old gentleman, for fear, you know, lest he should have gone to sleep with a bottle or two of French brandy under his head. I've known corpses come in here well stored with that sort of provision."

"And what if there war a bottle of brandy inside, Mr. Raspberry?" said Barney, alarmed, "where would be the harm?"

"The harm!—where's the harm in defrauding his Majesty's revenue? The harm would be, that we should seize bottles, coffin, body and all, my tight lad," said Raspberry, who was a joker.

"Body and all!—saze the body! Gob! I'd like to know what law you have for that, ony how."

"The *Habeas Corpus* Act, Sir," answered Raspberry, laughing at a jest lost unfortunately on the illiterate serving-man.

Sam Raspberry was a character, and deserves a paragraph. He was a man of about six feet six inches in height, with shoulders and protuberance in proportion, and with humour and goodness just as his size. Conceive this man—

mountain dressed out as a child of four years old, in cap and frock, with a coral and bells about his neck, and some similar plaything in his hand, acting the infant inimitably, blubbering and scarce able to walk;—such was the character in which Sam Raspberry chose to appear at a city masquerade, to the everlasting laughter of almost the whole metropolis there congregated. Such freaks on the part of Sam were numerous: another delight of his was to parade the streets, linked to the smallest possible man he could lay hold on, like a seventy-four with her jolly-boat in tow.

Sam had another peculiarity, whence he derived the name, under which he went more generally than under any other, of the Sturdy Beggar. He was sadly given to charity; and not only charitable himself, but the cause of it in others—in that he was indefatigable, importunate, impudent, and humorous in collecting for the poor. It being a rule in political economy, that a supply always creates a demand, Sam was never without supplicants and objects, which led him a life of continual supplication

and begging. Thus came it, that he was the pleasantest fellow in the world after dinner, and the greatest bore before it; and as welcome a guest at the one time as he was a dreaded dun at the other.

Such was the officer of his Majesty's customs, that stood over the coffin of Lord Manvers, hammer and turnscrew in hand, resolved to face the sight of death—nay, of putrefaction, in the discharge of his duty. Barney alone, according to his request, was present, and seemed in very uneasy expectancy of the operation. Sam Raspberry's powerful hand was not long in unscrewing the lid,—he raised it, and fell back :—

“ Whe'then the divil run a-hunting with your curiosity, Sam Raspberry,” said the defunct Lord Manvers, raising himself upon his elbow, “ you can't let even the dead rest.”

“ I beg ten thousand pardons, Mr. M'Loughlin, I had not the least thought in life of disturbing you. I was thinking of French brandy, and nothing else, when your head popt up.”

“ Faith, then, if it wasn't a right guess, 'twas

a near one, for some such contraband article was here with me."

"So I guessed," said Sam, "from your honest servant's alarm."

"Here, Barney," said Mr. M'Loughlin, holding forth a couple of bottles, that had lately contained the object of Mr. Raspberry's search; "it was a stifling birth, in spite of all the augur holes you bored;—cleanse me of these chicken bones;—G—! the next time I go into a coffin, I'll die of a dropsy, and have more room."

"And why! what, in the name of G—! Mr. M'Loughlin!" cried the astonished Raspberry, "is the cause of all this?"

"The cause!—why, isn't Parliament dissolved these six weeks, Sam?—and isn't there an army of bailiffs up in every county to intercept my journey to my own sweet Connemara? so I am travelling, like other great folks, incog; and though my equipage is not of the gayest, nor the most roomy, still I hold it both freer and gayer than any apartment in the Marshalsea."

"Well, if that trick doesn't bang me out and out!" said Sam.

"Come, nail me down once more, old boy, for fear the rogues would smell a rat, before I'm off this cursed long wall of yours."

The officer of the customs was about to obey, till he bethought him of the noble opportunity offered for his favourite hobby of collecting. "Allow me, Sir," said he, "to solicit a pound note from you for the Female Penitentiary."

"The devil take your conscience, Raspberry, t' ask a man in a coffin to subscribe for another penitentiary, as if this wasn't as nate a little one as ever debtor crept into, without subscribing for any other."

Sam, however, was positive in behalf of his Penitentiary, and refused to screw down Mr. M'Loughlin into the late Lord Manvers, till he got his solicited subscription. That pocketed, all was well: his lordship's coffin was marked with the chalked permit of the custom-house, borne to the prepared hearse, and so conveyed to an hotel in the city.

CHAPTER II.

“FROM Cork and Kerry to Londonderry,” as O’Doherty hath it, “there never was a better fellow than Dick M’Loughlin. He was a very prince; ay, every inch a king” in his own domains; where none durst approach within fifty yards of his majesty without hat in hand;—his word was a law to the bogs, his smile sunshine, that would make even a clamp of black turf rejoice with gladness; and as to his frown, it was withering, ’twas annihilation. Philosophers say, that the possession of absolute power will corrupt the purest heart, and infect with the bile of tyranny even the most benign disposition:—a fig for such philosophy,—the monarch of Connemara was a living lie to the proposition. For, in all the plenitude of his

power, against which the very waves of his neighbour and well-beloved cousin the Atlantic might rise in vain, Dick was the most generous, most benevolent, tender-hearted, and philanthropic of mankind. Have my readers ever beheld that ingenious work of art degraded, in the beautiful city of Cloyne, into the sign of a *shebeen*?—but let that pass; there is the parson, who saith, *I pray for all*; the red-coat who *fights*; the ruddy visage of John Bull that declares, in a circular space resembling the puff of a tobacco-pipe, *I pay*. Now Dick should be the sixth *all*, next in rank to John, not that he pays for all or any; *that*, for some reason or other, not being his *forte*; but this being his superscription, *I feel for all*, his right hand pressed upon his left breast.

And never could the flattering art of limning hit upon attitude or expression more just,—for Dick was a philanthropist *par excellence*, one that did not confine his sympathies to the limited and biped portion of humanity, but extended them, with the impulse of a true Irish heart, throughout the whole sentient kingdom

of Nature. That "noble animal the horse," as a brother potentate of Dick's would say, was the object of his prime regard; bulls and bullocks he protected; and for cows, his breast overflowed with the milk of human kindness. In short, he was the very Saturn of the hoofed tribe; and the golden age of horseflesh and of cowflesh is to be dated from the commencement of the nineteenth century. The canine and the feline species also went not without his protection; and his statesman-like views extended to the amelioration of the condition of caterpillars, and the introduction of *enseignement mutuel* amongst the oyster beds of Carlingford.

The Irish, though "a persecuted and a hard drinking people," are, nevertheless, a sentimental one, especially after dinner. And at such seasons, which they boast as "the feast of reason and the flow of soul,"—in the interpretation of which you may read, a devilled drumstick for reason, and whiskey for soul,—they are very fond of instituting a comparison between Dick M'Loughlin and Rousseau. I cannot say but that this Frenchman is a most convenient per-

sonage to all character-limners, whether historians, critics, or essayists. There is no genius under the sun that cannot be compared or contrasted with him. Thomas Moore found out Byron, one day, to be a ditto of him ; and Lord John Russell, but the other, discovered his fellow in Burke. Now let me try my hand at a comparison between the French Philosopher and the Irish monarch. "Both were men whose imagination outstripped their judgment." Both were eminent philanthropists, and both encountered, for their philanthropic schemes, the ridicule of their more hard-hearted fellows. Both were great men, bestowed by a remote and provincial state to the metropolis, that their presence from time to time adorned. Their situations in life, though different, were not dissimilar ;—the monarch ruled over a rude and uncivilized state ; and the philosopher took care to uncivilize every subject that entered under his intellectual sway. One persecuted the cruel mob of the English metropolis ; the other was persecuted by the unfeeling mob of the French. One, to be sure, was an orator ; the

other a writer,—but both were equally eloquent; and one, in despite of blunder, and the other, in despite of paradox, seldom failed in the end to convince and win over all hearers to their opinion. In love—but let us draw a veil over the foibles of great men. In debt—why let us do the same. And my comparison is already complete.

It was in a small hotel in Great Britain-street, Dublin, that our philanthropist emerged from his coffin, and took breath.

“Barney,” was his first word, “begone to Cooke-street, and dispose of this travelling-carriage; for, by St. Patrick! I’ll never enter it more while living, to ’scape all the sheriffs in Leinster.”

“And the bet, your honour!”

“Oh! bad luck to the bets,” said Dick, “I never won one of them but I lost.”

“That’s mighty quare, any how—but what’s the rest of it?”

“Why the bet, Barney, was not to land in Ireland at any place but the Pigeon-House, and to enter Connaught by no passage but Athlone bridge.”

"Athlone bridge!" said Barney, "by gemini! that's a wicked spot. That rascally town's alive with bailiffs, magistrates, writs, and summonses."

"Eels, priests, prostitutes, and soldiers," added his master.

"Alas! do what we will," said the serving-man, "you'll never cross the bridge."

"I will, by G——!" cried Dick M'Loughlin, swearing with all the vehemence at least, if not with the feeling, of my Uncle Toby.

But my readers must be informed respecting this celebrated wager.

Heaven knows what Dick had been doing, but the dissolution of Parliament took him quite by surprise; and whether it was that he was in love, or in drink, or had not the mopusses ready, Dick despaired of getting over the herring pond in time to pass safe to his kingdom from the clutches of the law. The worthy member at this was wroth, and expostulated with my Lord ——— in terms both hot and hearty. The bland firmness of his lordship soon, however, smoothed down the ruffled plumage of Dick's choler.

"A man of your talent and knowledge of the world, Mr. M'Loughlin," said his Lordship, "ought to turn this *contre-temps* to his advantage."

"I haven't the honour," said Dick in reply, "to know Counter-Tom. But being of your Lordship's intimacy, he must be a clever fellow; and if he would help me through ——"

"Nay! you mistake, Mr. T——"

"I mistake! blood and ——! I have you to know, my Lord, that I never made a mistake; no, nor a blunder, in the whole course of my life."

"Come, come, my Connaught Ranger!" said his Lordship, "don't bluster,—we are too old stagers now to blow one another's brains out. As to Counter-Tom, whom you did not mistake, you shall know him one of these days."

"I know him already, and no thanks to you," said Dick, still wroth at being informed he was under a mistake; "he is Pozzo di Borgo's secretary."

"He is," replied his Lordship; "and, more—

over, a Siberian Prince. But, touching your dilemma, have you ever been at Newmarket?"

"No!" said Dick; "I never attend the inhuman sport of horse-racing."

"A hem!—but you've been of old upon the Curragh, and know what folk there mean by covering a man's losses."

"Yes, I've some idea o' that."

"What think you of trying it now? You owe a little, Mr. M'Loughlin."

"Owe a little!" said Dick, angry at having his debts degraded in sum; "I'd have you to know, my Lord, that I owe as much as any man in Great Britain."

His lordship was not inclined to dispute the amount of Dick's negative property; so he waved that argument, and proceeded with his counsel.

"How many chances against your escape?"

"An hundred to one against any man, barring my own proper self," replied Dick.

"Make the chance more against you, then, by fixing places of landing and passage, and bet any gull a few cool thousands that you

escape in despite of these obstacles, and it makes the risk worth running."

Dick shook forcibly his Lordship's hand, and swore his gratitude. He turned westward ; and in two days had secured his bet, as we have given it, ordered his coffin, and set out.

Half of the wager was, as our readers have perceived, won by the landing securely at the Pigeon-House. To travel through by-roads to Athlone was not very difficult and dangerous, and required very little exertion of invention ; but how to get across that *pons asinorum*, as Dick might have called the bridge, from the puzzle it put him into, as well as from other reasons. It was the direct road to his home ; — his passage was, of course, expected, and divers broad-shouldered men, armed with divers powerful strips of parchment, attended to intercept the further march of the monarch. It was the only bridge, too, that spanned the Shannon for some forty or fifty miles on either side of it, and was thereby the only and the very key of Connaught. St. Ruth defended it as such in days of yore ; and Ginkell,

unable to force it, forded the rapid river below; but this was an act of prowess that the wager forbade our friend to try. A *bonâ fide* passage of the bridge was to be effected, and disguise seemed the only means.

"I must invent," said Dick, tapping his forehead in the style of Kean; "Barney, get me a bottle of the mountain-daisy. And as to the coffin, you'd better leave it where it is, or send it on before us; for elections are approaching in the county Galway, and if I don't myself, a friend, at least, will be sure to want it. Indeed, Barney, if you could get another, a nate little one, that would fit in that (the other candidate's a little man)—two coffins, Barney—do you hear me?—the market would not be overstocked with the commodity."

Barney listed to this very grave advice, touching an importation of coffins into the county Galway; but first of all he brought the mountain-daisy. Lord Byron says, that "an Irish peasant, with a little whiskey in his head, will invent and imagine more than would furnish forth a modern poem." Perhaps so,—I

wish some of our very best poets, now-a-days, would bribe the said peasant with a little whiskey, to furnish them with some little of the imagination and invention that the sons of the Muse are so beginning to lack. If the peasant, however, can imagine by the aid of drink, what must not the prince be able to effect by the same agency? Before the mountain-daisy had travelled half down the bottle's side, Dick's invention had hit upon a plan for crossing the Ass's Bridge of Athlone. He called forthwith his trusty valet, and communicated to him the disguise under which he intended to defy the keen eye of the under-snappers of the law. The prime minister, in the tight mourning frock, shook his head at the idea, like Lord Burleigh, and thought it perilous. Dick, however, upheld his resolution; and as, in this case, the minister was not responsible, the sovereign had his way.

CHAPTER III.

THE fattest man in Ireland, if not in Great Britain, was Arthur Kelly. His dimensions I cannot exactly give; but there can be no doubt they would, in numerals, have looked prodigious upon a booth in Bartholomew Fair, and gathered a little fortune from the curious. He was, in fact, of such a size, that the scope of one's imagination would not contain it; and if you parted with him yesterday, so much did your recollected idea of him ever fall short of the original, that your amazement on beholding him the next day was as great as when you first saw him, eclipsing, either two sides of a room and half its furniture, or the better part of the landscape, if ye were in the open air. Any Falstaff that the stage ever stuffed, was

but a child to him; such a moving enormity was he.

Arthur was a boon companion, well known over all the West of Ireland, welcome every where for his size and good humour; if, indeed, it required any requisites whatsoever to make any one welcome in that most hospitable of all tracts. This hospitality of all and every one, Arthur took care to have yearly recourse to: he fell away sadly, he complained, if he stayed more than a fortnight in any one neighbourhood,—so that if he over-ate, or overdrank his welcome, he at least never outstaid it. He was a lie to the proverb, being a rolling stone that gathered an enormity of moss; and neither in flesh nor pocket was he the worse for his continual peregrinations. Arthur, too, was esteemed throughout the whole circuit of his rambles as a wit and a wag of the first order,—why, I never could discover. But since the age of Shakspeare, who, by his Falstaff, reversed the old Grecian proverb of “A large stomach produceth not a subtle mind,” not mere corpulency, perhaps, but the extreme of it is accounted sy-

nonymous with wit ;—it implies the necessity of it, and ever so sorry a joke issuing from so large a reservoir, is thereon esteemed a good thing. For this reason certainly, and for no other, could Arthur have gained the character of a wit ; for, in truth, he was the most blundering punster, that ever lived by putting the King's English out of joint. His fame long ago reached the ears of Miss Edgeworth ; and she, the fair and powerful magician, struck into life her idea of him under the title of Sir Terence O'Fea ; but no sooner did she see this Falstaff of Connaught, than she regretted her misrepresentation, and acknowledged that not the least similitude existed between Arthur and Sir Terence.

Under this character, and in the disguise of Arthur Kelly's corpulency, was it Dick M'Loughlin's resolution to cross the bridge of Athlone ; and Barney was commissioned forthwith to get stuffing and wadding sufficient, with the enormous boots, like buckets, and other spacious habiliments, which could belong to no other man in either Connaught or Lein-

ster, than Arthur Kelly. These took a day or two to procure, and with them among his effects, Dick journeyed by quiet roads towards Athlone; much in the curved line that Irish fire-arms are said to shoot, *i. e.* round a corner. I believe it has not been set down as part of the bet, which it nevertheless was, that the passage of the bridge by our worthy should take place by daylight. However, there was half an hour after sunset and before sunrise allowed in the day; but Dick scorned, as he said, to be either a peep-o'-day-boy, or a twilight skulker; and relied on the august character of Arthur Kelly to protect him through at mid-day. He had, moreover, chosen well his time,—it was the week of the famous fair of Ballinasloe, whither myriads, both of vehicles and foot-passengers, biped and quadruped, were every hour hurrying over the stipulated bridge. Nor did Dick's countenance much irresemble Arthur's, being both stamped potatoes, disks broad and ruddy, like the setting sun, with little idle pencilling of feature thereon.

The sensation was great when the form of

Arthur Kelly made its appearance in the streets of Athlone. The man with the nose, had he returned to Strasburgh, could not have caused a greater uproar in the Rhenish city. Not a window was untenanted ; pig and bullock drivers ceased to goad, and stopped to gaze ; and the very prize oxen lowed at an animal more enormous than themselves. The fat man rode on, not at all at his ease under this general attention. He committed several blunders ; one was, nodding to the sovereign of Athlone, a most important personage, who stood regulating the march of the oxen, and magisterially lording their drivers. The monarch of Athlone returned not the salute of the monarch of Connemara, disdaining, as he deemed it, to return the salute of fat Arthur Kelly ; for the sovereign, like his brother in brains and dignity, the Mayor of Garret, stood upon his dignity. The regent (my readers are astonished at all these crowned heads and princes of the blood) followed the dignified example of his august Sire. Dick was wroth ; but he swallowed the oath that had already gotten as far

as his lips, and spurred his overloaded steed, even to stumbling down, to the fated bridge. There was a bailiff in every filthy recess of it, and a posse of them leaning in wait upon the Queen's arms, as some monument of Elizabeth's days upon its battlements is called; but they knew not the wolf in the fat sheep's clothing, and in five minutes Dick's wager was all as won as if it had been in his pocket.

Having refreshed himself at the Three Blackmoor's Heads, Dick pushed on, still in his assumed size and character, for Ballinasloe; once there, he knew himself as safe as in the wilds of Connemara, as shepherds and other peasantry from that savage region were in myriads at the fair, and would protect him; nay, lay the town level at his command. It was a wearisome and a sweltering journey both for horse and man; and for the latter not least, considering the immense mass of feathers, tow, flannel, and outer garments in which he was enveloped. Still, to get rid of them prematurely might have been attended with danger, as the county Roscommon, which he traversed, was not without its

law-officers and strips of parchment. And so, in "durance vile," Dick trudged along, until the picturesque town of Ballinasloe appeared in view, its outskirts thronged with the beggars that were exorcised from its streets, and who are, in my mind, the very *moral* of perfect begging. By the Virgin! and by all the Saints!—the mother that bore you! and an hundred such mixtures of supplication and implication, they literally frighten alms from the stoutest-hearted wayfarer. "Hurrying to and fro" there was, with a vengeance, of every vehicle under the sun; sheep, bullocks, pigs, Con-naught-men, and other heads of cattle. But this was not the fair side of that sweet town, so I must defer my description. Welcome was the sight of the town to Dick, and the ivy-grown ruins that skirt the bridge: they might pass for the remains of an ancient palace, or castle, tenanted by Ollum Fodlah, or some such worthy; yet I doubt if the miller, that ground the country corn there, lies as yet cold in his grave.

Dick rode over the bridge in his corpulent disguise, and was welcomed by all the graziers

as the 'pride of the prize show ; he was even greeted with acclamations. But on entering the main street, his appearance evidently excited other sensations. The first beholders started at his sight, gazed with their eyes unwinking, or turned them up street in search of some other object ;—anon, the passengers began to flee, and the whole throng grew strangely discomfited at Dick in disguise ;—at last an old hooded hag stopped opposite to him, clapped her hands and cried,

“Och wirra ! Arthur, Arthur Kelly ! my darlint boy, that I've been seeing in beauty and incrase these twinty year, is there an end o' ye at last ? Holy Vargin ! safe us ! but it's the plainest body-like *fetch* I ever seed in my life.”

The fact was, Arthur Kelly himself had been at the fair, as was usual with him, from the commencement ; and was, at the very moment, *in propria persona* at the other end of the street, remarked, for who could pass him without remarking, by all the crowd ; who now beheld in Dick another Arthur all as fat as he. In such enormity of size, features pass for

nothing—no one dreamed of the possibility of any man existing different from Arthur Kelly, and his rival in size, yet unknown and unheard-of. In short, Dick was set down by all as Arthur's *fetch*, and this foreboded certain disaster and death to the fat Connaught-man. Half Ballinasloe was sunk in pity and in fright.

It is a maxim generally found to hold true in life, that however deeply others feel for us, and sympathize in our misfortunes, we are apt to be, after all, more deeply interested and affected for ourselves. So at least it proved in this case. The inhabitants and visitors of Ballinasloe felt for Arthur's foretokened fate; but Arthur himself, on beholding his own *fetch* ambling down street on a nag the very *moral* of his own, as he would have said, was by far the most alarmed personage in the parish. Had he been a-foot, so completely was he petrified, that he must have awaited the coming of his ghostly semblance; but being a-horse, his flight was instinctively produced by a turn of the bridle and a pressure of his

heel, so very forcible and unusual, that his steed set off with the mightiest attempt at a gallop, certainly, that steed ever made under Arthur Kelly. Even the trot effected was lamentable, being that of a boy endeavouring to carry his elder by ten years, disjointed and top-heavy, every step achieved in the very teeth of all probability. The gaze of the spectators was thus averted from Dick to his hapless prototype; and it was curious to observe the interest each beholder took in the fat man's career, veering involuntarily their arms and attitude on the opposite side to that on which Arthur's weight, for the moment, preponderated. But this did not serve; for after traversing a rood with a speed that he had not known for at least a score of years, down came Arthur and his steed, rolling one over the other. Luckily, it was the grass of the fair-green; at any rate the horse had the worst of it when undermost, and Arthur was uninjured, when the steed was uppermost.

Dick was, by this time, aware of the cause of his terrifying appearance; and immediately, to the great consolation of Arthur and the

whole crowd, he uncased him, delivered himself from the incumbrance of buckets, tow-bags, and pillows, and stood, though strangely accoutred, at once confessed the original and undeniable Dick M'Loughlin. There was a shout of joy and welcome then, indeed; for great had been the anxiety and fear amongst his subjects, that they should not have the honour of his presence amongst them this season, so numerous and imminent were known to be the perils that beset his path. Amongst the first that paid obeisance to the monarch, was Arthur Kelly, the Falstaff of his court; who readily asserted to Dick, and backed it moreover with an oath, that for no earthly purpose had he eaten and drunk for the last twenty years, and got himself into such unexampled condition, but to be of use to Mr. M'Loughlin, in the way that he had been, by affording him so secure and comfortable an envelope. But laughter is short-winded; and, therefore, in this my comic, or my would-be comic tale, I cut my chapter according to my breath.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is not a fair in Christendom, except perhaps Leipzig, that, compared with Ballinasloe, can be considered as more than a market. The whole west of Ireland, a rude tract of pasture and of pastors, hurry thither with their flocks and herds; and the men of the East betake themselves to truckle and barter with these savages, giving them in exchange for their sheep and oxen, all the knick-knackery and conveniences that the manufactories of their more civilized district supply them with. For a month previous to the fair, the rocky hills and swampy morasses of Connaught are in motion; not a man nor an ox, nor an animal of any sort, will be left behind: it is like the emigration of an immense tribe,—the Vandals or the Huns, moving

with flocks, wives, chattels, and all. On the other side, Leinster is in an equal bustle: its population proceed to the yearly rendezvous in gig and dog-cart; or, the most of them, on the tops of stage-coaches. Of these there will be not only the dealers in useful and necessary merchandize, clothiers, hatters, grocers, *et cætera*, who all erect their temporary booths in the town; but even goldsmiths, toymen, and gingerbread manufacturers, make it a speculation to open business for the fair-week in Ballinasloe, and attract by their gewgaws a considerable portion of cash from the pockets of the better order of the western savages. It is, indeed, the only opportunity that these Connaught proprietors have of purchasing a piece of good cloth for their backs, or a beaver hat, or muslins and trinkets for their wives and daughters, unless they submit to be robbed by the wandering pedlar, that, all the rest of the year having the market to himself, extorts the price he wills, most unpoetically, in despite of his poetical fame.

There has always appeared to me something

very primitive and oriental in this scene;—two numerous and different nations, as it were, meeting for the purposes of exchange—a caravan of Syrian merchants trafficking with an Arab tribe, both people contrasted in garb and tongue; and those Easterns not more so, than the gaunt, stolid, mighty-mouthed and mighty-muscled Connaught-man, with the snug, keen, easy rogue of a Leinster chapman,—or than the wild Irish that the one flings from his mouth, with the sly, insidious slang that runs like oil from the tongue of the other. The days set apart for the sale of sheep offer the most picturesque view of the fair: the town itself, with all its dependencies, could not contain the countless multitude of its fleecy visitors:—Lord Clancarty, however, accommodates them with his ample domain. To overlook this tract, covered with the white and bleating multitude, is a fine sight—each flock surrounded with its guard of Patagonian shepherds, all armed with crooks, twice as gigantic as themselves, with which they are inconceivably active in catching any straggler from their care, however confounded in a crowd

of its neighbours. Upon the night preceding the fair the sight is not unpicturesque, viewed from the lofty wall that surrounds his Lordship's park: if it be dark, the murmur of the hushed multitude, produced merely by the breathing of so many living creatures, is heard, broken, perhaps, by a solitary bleat, or Irish ejaculation; whilst the numerous watchfires of each bivouac of shepherds unite the appearance with the hum of a camp: if it be moonlight, the snow-white park beneath her beam is more beautiful still; the figures are seen in standing or reposing attitudes by their fires, and the slumber of so immense a mass is contrasted with the wakefulness of such a night.

Although I thus act Cicerone to my readers in pointing out to them the sentimentalities of this great Irish fair, my present hero was a man who "cared for none of these things," and who had rather discuss a jug of pothien punch at the hour of moonlight, than stir to contemplate even Mucruss or Melrose. Once amongst the Connaught-men, Dick snapped his fingers at the law, and gave himself up wholly to the care

of the approaching election for his county. For this purpose, he circumambiated the fair, and blandly addressed every acquaintance high and low. He attended a sitting, or rather standing; of the farming society, met to consider of a new mode of putting an end to bullocks by dirking them in the spine. The experiment was tried in an assemblage of farming prelates, nobles, and amateurs; but the ox, it seemed, preferred being knocked on the head, for he broke loose after an ill-directed stab, and dissolved the farming jury from around him most abruptly, flinging a tall bishop, canonicals and all, into a volcano of hissing lime, and making Arthur Kelly run, for the second time in his life and in one day.

Having done all these and divers other pretty things, Dick M'Loughlin resolved to set out next morning for his castle; not, however, till he had collected as large a suite of guests and courtiers, as hard Irish pressing and the certainty of an Irish welcome could allure from other hospitable mansions to his. He succeeded in this pretty well, having collected about four-

score guests, either coming, or about to come, to Ballycarrigaclunah Castle. To enumerate them even, far less describe them, would make this chapter rival Homer's second book ; but I could not think of taxing the jaws of my English readers to such an Herculean task of pronunciation. Dick had just returned to his lodgings, when Barney came in to say, that a " Frinçhman had been after his honour oncet or twicet—a black, wicked-looking dog, widout e'er a collar to his shirt." Dick smiled ; but nevertheless partook of his domestic's suspicions of the visitor, for his want of collar. At this moment his rap was heard, and a fine, tall, commanding foreigner was ushered into the room. Dick eyed him from top to toe, and then from toe to top. He was young, and what an Englishman would call sallow, although the unvarying brown of his cheek was but where warfare had outbronzed the blush of boyhood. Over his long visage of manly traits fell, like a weeping willow, on one side a world of hair, to which his brawny hand, wonderfully muscular for so slight a person, acted every second minute the friendly part of

pocket-comb. The Mounseer handed a note to Dick, who opened it, and read as follows:—

“ Dear Dick, the bearer is a gentleman, and a soldier ——”

“ How d’ye do, Sir? I am very happy to see you,” said Dick, starting up and seizing the Frenchman by the hand; “ sit down;—when did you come to this part of the country? By the powers! ye ’re welcome!—You ’ll come to Ballycarrigaclunah with me to-morrow, and stay a month, a year, ay, or twenty years, if ye will !”

The Frenchman, who understood the English language not too well, and comprehended still less the alacrity with which an Irish heart runs to hospitality, was amazed; and thinking it was explanation Mr. McLoughlin demanded, he said, “ *Voilà, Sire.*” Dick read on:—

“ The bearer is a gentleman and a soldier—sufficient introduction to you, even from me, abhorring, as we do, each other’s principles—*mais*

vive notre ami !—l'ennemi !—as they say here. was one of Nap's young guard, and a gallant fellow, to whom Paris at present would be just as agreeable an abode as Castle-street, Dublin, to me. Seeing which, he is bent on travel; above all, desires to penetrate into the kingdom of Connemara;—why, I know not, but 'tis his whim—most likely to ascertain the military strength, &c. of your little empire. More seriously speaking, he is somewhat of a geologist; and is, I believe, empowered by a mercantile house to contract for a supply of your purest marble from your lately-discovered quarry.

“Independent of all this, Captain St. Roque is the friend of,

“Your, as of old,

“A. O'C.”

“Paris, Rue Neuve de Mathurins.”

“Caed millia faltha, you're as welcome as the flowers in May!” cried Dick to the young stranger; “and how is Arthur?”

“*Gai comme un François*; as gay as a Frenchman!”

“As an Irishman, you mean!”

“ *C'est égal.*”

“ You're welcome at any rate, Captain Rock, or St. Rock; od ! it's a bad name you travel with, and not much better for being sainted. But we care little for these things in Connemara.”

Suffice it for the present, that the young Frenchman became instantly one of Dick's suite; and it was arranged that they should all set forth on the following morning.

The procession that did set forth at the appointed time, well deserved description from the pen of Chaucer, and the pencil of Stothard. Preceded by a strong van-guard of his pedestrian subjects, rode the monarch surrounded by a most motley court, all ambitious of the honour of cavalcading near to his person: this honour was enjoyed by all who had the good luck to be mounted on their own good steeds. The rest were accommodated each on the back of a little ragged poney, a race indigenous of the wilds of Connemara, threescore of which had been ordered by Dick to the fair, for the conveyance of his guests thence to Ballycarriga-

clunah Castle. They were almost as small as sheep; and the Frenchman, who was mounted, or rather descended, on the back of one of them, could exclaim with the Irishman, who trotted through the mud to a party, enclosed in a bottomless sedan-chair, that, "but for the honour of the thing, he might have walked."

Thus the gay caravan journeyed through the bogs and wilds of Connaught, troubling no inn, there being, in truth, no inn to trouble; but remaining, I cannot say always reposing, for the night at some hospitable mansion, the owner of which failed not to welcome this tribe of locusts with the greatest delight. And did the next morn happen to look lowering, a case of very frequent occurrence even in the summers of our dear Western Isle, this was excuse sufficient for pressing the caravan to another day's stay, and another night's carouse. Thus the progress was somewhat tedious; and more than a week had elapsed ere Dick had entered his dominions, and set up his court once more in Carrigaclunah Castle.

CHAPTER V.

IT was with mighty expectations that Ernest St. Roque found himself within a few hours' journey of Ballycarrigaclunah. So much had he been impressed throughout his progress by his host's majesty and importance, visible in the obsequiousness of all who approached him, that the young Frenchman, if he looked not exactly for Fontainebleau or Compiègne, expected, at least, a feudal fortress, whose battlements were to be seen relieved against the glowing sky of the west, and which was to be entered, after a world of parley and military ceremony, over lowered draw-bridge, and beneath a well-flanked and buttressed portal. The country they traversed was wild even to sublimity; not from the height of mountains in view, which, in fact, were

dwarfish, nor from any of those vulgar causes of the sublime ; the effect being produced, as in the desert, by the intense feeling of solitariness that prevailed. Here the road traversed a moving bog, that shook for a rood all round the tramp of the passing party, causing the dykes on each side to bubble and rise over the tops of the reeds, by the pressure of the road. There it mounted over limestone rocks, bursting at intervals from the soil, on which the grass lay green and short, shorn, as it appeared, more by the western wind, than by sheep. Lakes were visible in every hollow ; but no appearance of tree or copse skirted their marshy banks, to give them the least title to beauty. St. Roque was left to enjoy, perfectly uninterrupted, the contemplation of this wild scenery. The Erse was the language most generally spoken around him, or English to him as unintelligible ; and if he ventured on a query respecting any object that struck him, the only answer that such ever produced was "Anan."

At length a turn of the road brought into view a castle, surrounded by, or rather sunk in,

a lake. It was evidently a ruin, and a strikingly picturesque ruin, reflected, as it was, in the sheet of water on which it reposed. "That's Ballycarrigaclunah castle," said some kind informant to the young Frenchman.

"That!" said the young soldier, who would at the moment have exchanged all his dreams of hall and battlement and castlery, for a comfortable lodging upon dry land.

"That same, in troth, is Ballycarrigaclunah; and many a merry day, and many a sore one, the ould walls have seen."

As the cavalcade approached the lake, it became the wonder of the Frenchman how such numbers were to reach or inhabit such a place; which, on a nearer inspection, he discovered to be a ruin more forlorn than even he had imagined. Two snow-white and majestic swans issued at the moment from the portal to welcome, as it were, the chief, for whom they seemed to hold the fortress in possession. A fairy tale might be built upon the circumstance. This reassured St. Roque, whose better hopes were fulfilled by the cavalcade's turning from the lake and its

ruined castle, towards an habitation,—thatched certainly, mean, and by no means picturesque ; still its white-washed walls, and snugly thatched roof, promised comfort and homely welcome.

“ Yon’s the ould castle, but this is the new,” said his old informant to the Frenchman ; who had not made allowance enough for Irish exaggeration, and could not conceive why a thatched house should be called a castle.

The Duke of Northumberland never set up his flag at Alnwick to a more hospitable end, than did Dick at Ballycarrigaclunah. His own proper *cortège*, indeed, formed no irrespectable number to entertain ; but they were soon lost in the crowd that arrived to greet the monarch on his return. The table groaned under the good things of the wild region, and the dark oak roof-tree that traversed the ceiling of the spacious hall, and vauntingly protruded itself as if to show all that it supported, had not beheld such a feast, nor re-echoed such a clamour, at least since its lord’s last election. The old divisions of above and below the salt had been long done away with ; scarcely could they ever have

existed under such a master as the present, who seldom left a corner of his table unoccupied by the gentlest of guests. And a more spacious table than even that within was prepared in the open air, to receive the relics of the feast, at which a multitude of wild Connaught-men were entertained in honour of Dick's return, on actual meat,—the savour of which many of them now became acquainted with for the first time. Upon the clearing of the board within, claret and whiskey made their appearance in equal abundance:—to avoid drinking, or even to drink temperately, no one could hope;—but the difficulty was to prevent these very different liquors from being mingled both in glass and stomach by the jovial exhortations and rude attention of each neighbour.

Although the approaching election of their host was the thought next every guest's heart, and nearest his tongue, yet there was a delicacy at first that forbid them launching all at once into such considerations, which might seem to interfere with the pure joy and gladness excited by the monarch's return. But the clink of

bottles and decanters soon silenced their scruples. When Dick, with that *esprit-de-corps* which always pervades royalty, had given his Majesty's health, and that, the loyal toast, had been drunk in solemn silence and devotion, that of Dick himself, the loyal candidate for the county, was proposed and drunk with furious enthusiasm. Thenceforward the company became resolved into an electioneering committee, and the merits and demerits, the influence, the politics, hopes, and audacity of every rival candidate, were discussed with open-mouthed earnestness. In the midst of this, the host winked to his trusty servant Barney, who disappeared, but soon re-entered, bearing, not the Blessed Bear which the Baron of Bradwardine would have demanded at such a time, but nothing more nor less than—a coffin!

In the midst of the convivial party, Barney placed the ill-omened tenement of death, and thereon he placed a pair of Dick's best Wog-dons, who despised from his heart the more modern manufacture of Manton.

"Now, gentlemen," said Dick, standing up,

and addressing the company, who listed in solemn silence, "you see my motto. I came, you see, provided for the worst; and though I may be accused of importing here English manufacture, it is for the patriotic purpose of preventing the exportation of bad Irish live stock to England."—Loud applause.—"As to my principles, the world is well acquainted with them—I am for his Majesty the King of England, and his Majesty the King of England's ministers, and for the poor, be they man or beast; and elected I will be for the county, in spite of ———, the Devil, and Doctor Faustus! So let us drink a bumper all of us off of my black motto yonder, and a pleasant birth in it soon, either to myself or to one of my opponents!"

The toast was drunk of course with three times three; the whole scene being productive of the greatest amazement to our friend Captain St. Roque, who was puzzling his brain to discover what all this meant, keeping his mouth, in the mean time, in the overt act of suspense.

"Pardon me," quoth the Frenchman to his

neighbour, "but is this the sort of free election of which Great Britain boasts so much?"

"Musha! where were you born, Mr. Frenchman?" was the reply; "it is quite a different thing in the two countries. In England, I am tould, they choose the parliament-men, and the club-men, and all those sort of men with banes; in little Ireland we do it with bullets:—that's the differ."

"Here's success to little Connemara!" cried one of the guests, holding up his glass; "she is the girl for out-voting a county. How many times will you think it necessary, Mr. M^cL, to poll each freeholder?"

"Not more than three or four times, I should think," said the host, "if the boys stick well to their barricades, and cudgel every voter but the right ones."

"And that the Connemara boys can do right well, if they were united;—but I can tell you Corrib Castle looks black on Carrigaclunah."

"The Devil blast Corrib Castle to the lowest pit of hell! only I would not be cursing," exclaimed the host; "we can do without

O'Lamy, and in spite of O'Lamy, if he dare oppose us."

No one dared to contradict the choleric monarch, but the shaking of heads seemed very much to call the assertion in question.

"And how can O'Lamy, or any O' of them all, that don't possess a thousand acres one of them, contend with me, the master of a million?"

"By my conscience!" ventured one, "O'Lamy's watery acres are worth a kingdom of bog ones."

The speaker nearly brought upon himself the fate of Clitus by the bold comparison; but the monarch's wrath was soon cooled, nay, more, his judgment was convinced of the necessity of entering into negotiation with O'Lamy, and winning him over to his interest.

"Fire and flint!" muttered Dick, "this smuggling dog has grown a nabob, since I left this country."

"No! but a maritime power;—his schooners are thick enough to make a bridge almost between this and Bourdeaux. Od! they said the secretary used to overlook his smuggling

for the sake of the news that O'Lamy sent to the Castle, and through it to London, before any thing could reach ministers in a less round-about way. But now the peace is made, his tidings are of no use, and the government begin to let his Majesty's gun-brigs look after his schooners. It was but last week that one was chased up the length of Lough Corrib; ay! under his very castle walls; where the blue jackets dared not venture for fear of the Connemara-men, and the smuggler's petararoes."

"A damned dirty trick that of the government!" said Dick, "to turn upon a man the minute there is no more to be got from him."

"If O'Lamy heard you say but that much, ye'd be sworn friends; for he has no objection in life to you, only as a friend to the ministers. And he swears, that if they don't let Connemara have good wine from France, they sha'n't have Tory members from the county Galway."

"Auh! is it there the wind lies?"

"Sorrow a point else!"

“ Well ! we must see what is to be done.”

To all this conversation, Captain St. Roque seemed to pay the greatest attention ; and it was evident from his countenance, that his utmost powers were bent on construing into intelligibility every sentence that concerned O’Lamy. In these wishes, however, he was not for the present indulged further ; and even were the subject continued, the conversation, if it can be called such, grew so ejaculatory, abrupt, and indistinct, from the circulation of liquor, that it passed utterly all his capabilities of comprehension.

CHAPTER VI.

THE feast had commenced, nay, was over at an unusually early hour, the last day's journey having been but a short one; and Dick, moreover, always appointed two o'clock for the hour of dinner on days of state, that his poorer followers, whose comforts he studied much, might enjoy their meal, and have fit time for jollity after it. St. Roque, who, after the name of O'Lamy had ceased to echo in the conversation, began to feel weary of the carouse, stole unperceived from the hall at such a seasonable hour, that no one could have suspected any wish to escape, so that the Frenchman issued forth unimpeded. It was a fine summer's evening, and St. Roque, at the end of his journey, and near to the object of

his wishes, as he thought, at least to her abode, felt more than usually elated. "This is the wild scenery," said he, "that my lovely Agatha so loved to describe and dwell on. Those bogs, those rocks, that in her enthusiastic descriptions used to excite my laughter, seem beautiful to me now. Yon rugged mountain, bald and speckled with its bleached crags, and striped with foaming torrents, I recognise as contemplated before, when she depicted them. Those tiny lakes, with here and there a spot of beauty, doubly beautiful in such a wilderness; those stunted copses, matted and interlaced by the effects of the all-levelling blast; those glimpses of the far blue sea,—not one did my Agatha omit. Her tongue was truer than a pencil in portraying this scene of her childhood, this paradise both of her past memory and future hope; —*un paradis Irlandais*, an Irish paradise, without doubt," added the Frenchman, as he smiled at his own enthusiasm; "but with Agatha," and sentiment resumed its natural current.

A course of thought communicates its rapidity to the legs, and *vice versâ*. St. Roque,

without reflecting, left Barrycarrigaclunah and its carousal behind him, and hurried in the direction of the glimpse of blue sea, that had at first attracted his attention. The impediments of the ground urged, instead of checking his speed; for both rocks and bogs, tedious to thread and wind through, were speedily passed at a bounding pace. Before, however, he had gained a full view of the ocean, whither his steps were bent, the report of several cannon shot from thence attracted his curiosity. The sound of war, of any war, St. Roque could not hear with apathy; and even his former speed he determined to amend in order to arrive within view of the action. For this purpose he made a sudden attack upon a horde of wild ponies, that had collected, like the flock of steeds in Mazeppa, to observe the motions of an intruder;—he was lucky enough to lay firm hold upon one of the ragged little quadrupeds, and, mounting without the ceremony of either saddle or bridle, he urged the little steed towards the sea.

An eminence in a short time opened beneath

his view the ocean, whither he was bent; it formed a part of Galway bay, although the expanse of water and the heavy roll of sea bespoke the as yet uncircumscribed Atlantic. Before him the flat and shingly shore of Connemara stretched to the beach; opposite arose the lofty mountains of the county Clare; and the isles of Arran to the right, shut out the bay from ocean, much in the way that the isle of Capri breaks the extensive and desolate offing of the bay of Naples. The rays of the western sun were streaming up the gulph, shedding their tints of orange on both shores, and upon the full and swollen sails of two vessels, a brig and schooner, the only ones that for the present occupied the sea. A flash, and smoke, and report from the forecastle of one, and straight from the stern of the other, assured St. Roque that these were the combatants. The brig was evidently in full pursuit, and the schooner was running in as close to shore as safety permitted. The immediate conjecture of the young Frenchman, in which he was not mistaken, was, that the fugitive

schooner belonged to the contraband marine of O'Lamy, and the gun-brig in pursuit, as her flag bespoke, was his Majesty's. Fortunately for the gratification of St. Roque's curiosity, he was much to leeward and to landward of the combatants; for at the rate at which they both scudded before the western wind, he could have otherwise little hope of close observation. Arriving breathless upon the beach, he made to the point of a shingly promontory, a post of no small peril, being almost in line with the two vessels; the foremost of which keeping close in shore, soon came to turn the self-same point. Here St. Roque had a clear view of the schooner's deck, containing, seemingly, a crew of about a dozen stout fellows, bent at once on flight and combat. In the midst of them, upon the little vessel's stern, he was amazed to distinguish what he could not but conclude to be a female form; he could clearly discern her unbonneted head and flowing locks, and he could disbelieve it no longer when the fair form waved its hand to him, with an expression, as if warning him off from his

present perilous station ; more perilous as the schooner turned the point of land, and placed it between her and the enemy. His Majesty's gun-brig, however, regarded neither the female on the deck of the smugglers, nor yet an intrusive spectator like St. Roque, and slackened not in the least her fire upon the chace, which, for the present, was not returned. The brig was not long in turning the point ; and so rapidly did the vessels flit past St. Roque, that he could scarcely collect himself, and get clear of the rocky promontory, to the end of which he had scrambled, when he perceived, that all his attempts to keep up with them, even upon his little steed, would be futile. Still he kept along the coast in hopes of learning by some means or other the issue, which he could not hope to behold.

Calculation of the little that was left of daylight, or thoughts of returning to Ballycarraigclunah, did not enter the head of our French hero, so full was it of O'Lamy and his smuggling power, of Agatha and the fair commandante of the schooner. Thus chewing

the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, he wandered on coastwise, until the west had ceased to glow even with the last pale reflected rays of departed day. Desert and uninhabited as the coast was in general, still the reports of guns had attracted a few peasants to the coast; in fear and hope, no doubt, that they might be visited by a wreck, convenient, if not for any valuable pillage, at least for firing. The truth, however, having spread, that one of O'Lamy's boats was pursued by a revenue-vessel, interested every listener; and St. Roque, in his journey on, soon found himself in the midst of an host, eagerly pushing on to witness or learn the catastrophe. The firing had long ceased, but this might be attributed to the wind that blew from the party towards the scene of action. The night was by no means dark, being illumed a little by the starlight, but more by the continuous twilight of the midsummer season; so that although the gloom of night did rest upon the sea, it was to be hoped that the vessels might be descried, in whatever situation they remained.

After traversing three or four miles, with eyes vainly bent upon the deep, along the tiresome path of shingly shore and slippery seaweed, they heard the sound of voices loud in exclamation beyond them ; — on nearer approach, another crowd appeared to have gathered—torches gleamed in the hands of some, while others hurried to and fro ; the bustle and agitation spoke some scene of interest. St. Roque, and most of his companions, concluded that the smuggler had run on shore, and was disembarking her cargo, under protection of this wild army of Connemara-men. On coming up, however, it proved to be the very contrary event that had happened. The smuggling schooner had succeeded completely in her plan of escape ; making use of her accurate knowledge of the coast, she had kept in-shore, alluring her pursuer to the same dangerous contiguity. And here, it seems, the brig had struck, not more than half a quarter of a mile from shore, and, from the sail she carried, had almost instantly gone to pieces, thus allowing

the schooner to make her joyous escape from the clutches of the revenue.

As the two crowds joined, the tidings were soon communicated, and all exulted in the clever escape of O'Lamy's crew and vessel. The wreck, too, was a God-send, for which they were not unthankful;—yet, hostilely as they looked upon the crew of the perished vessel, such feelings did not silence humanity, and every nerve and hand were strained to save all that help could save. So sudden, however, and desperate had been the shock with which the brig had gone asunder, that not more than three or four sailors arrived living upon the land. As the tide beat in, several bodies were washed on shore, but life had been long extinct, and one or two had evidently met their death from grape-shot wounds before they encountered the fury of the waves. It was an anxious sight, to look out upon the waters, weltering in dim indistinctness. Some fancied that they could descry the wreck, though it could be but fancy. Not a boat was at hand, in de-

spite of the long line of coast, and of the established fisheries. The people, though on the brink of the Atlantic, were decidedly antimaritime; and a situation, that in England would have sufficed almost to man a navy, here supplied scarce a boatman, much less a sailor. A few ropes were all that could be extended to rescue any struggling seaman from the waves: all must have perished, and gone down with the first shock, as the tide was flowing in, the shore shelving and nowise dangerous, so that there was every chance of safety even for those who could merely float. Except the three seamen saved at first, spars, and yards, and casks, were all that arrived from the wreck to shore.

St. Roque lingered about the wreck, till every hope of saving more had disappeared, and until he had collected every particular respecting the smuggler, her escape, and the wreck of the brig. And at a pretty late hour of the night, he bethought himself of returning to Ballycarrigaclunah. It was sufficient for him to mention himself as a resident there, or at

all connected with its master, to command the services of as many guides as he thought proper. Independent of him, indeed, some one must have gone thither to bring information of the circumstance. So that, approaching the mid hour of the night, the young Frenchman set forth homeward in the wake of a stout guide, who struck immediately and fearlessly across the boggy ground that skirts the sea, at a swinging trot, each step placed firmly upon a knob of rushes; footing on any side of which was perilous in the extreme. The Frenchman bounded after as well as he could, cursing in his heart, however, all swampy soils, of which he had never traversed worse than this, he internally thought, even through the campaign of a Polish winter.

At such a pace they were not long in reaching Ballycarrigaclunah, in which the lights of festivity still blazed merrily, and the jovial clamours of good fellowship were not silenced. Dick still presided undisturbed, at the head of his board; and though the hour of claret had been long past, its successor, punch, still seemed to reign in its meridian sway. The com-

pany, no doubt, were thinner, some of those who disappeared, nevertheless, having departed no further than under the table: the rest, sober as they might all seem to one another, looked sadly flustered to one freshly entered; and the sober countenance of St. Roque, intruding itself amongst them, was as appalling as if it had been of spectral paleness.

“ Well, Mounseer Flincher, where have you been ? ” saluted St. Roque.

St. Roque in reply told his tale, as best he could; and the tidings he conveyed were important enough to turn off the severe scrutiny and condemnation to salt and water, to which otherwise he had certainly been submitted.

“ God! if that’s the go, O’Lamy’s in for it at last—the gun-brig lost, and some of the seamen evidently killed by shot, not shipwrecked. Well done, Prince O’Lamy! — your goose has laid her last golden egg. There’ll be a flotilla up Lough Corrib, and outlawry on the big smuggler. What’s to be done in that case ? ”

“ The sea is the King of Britain’s,” quoth another, “ and a cannon-shot from the coast all round—then he may batter Castle Corrib, or what castle he will, but amongst the hills and bogs here we’ll have no king nor king’s men but our own,—soldier, sailor, red-coat, blue-coat, revenue-man, or policeman; none shall enter Connemara, that we won’t knock on the head like sheep.”

“ You’ve laid down the law right, M’Manus,” said the monarch, “ a musquet-shot, I think, from the coast is the King of England’s, the rest of Connemara is inviolable. And much attached as I am to the existing government, the rights of my paternal soil are the first to be supported.”

A shout of admiration welcomed this patriotic resolution.

“ But we must not quarrel with our friends to please our enemies. And O’Lamy seems inclined to keep away from us,—perhaps oppose us.”

“ Ay, does he; and now that he has brought

the magistracy and the military, and all upon his back, by this last act, it would be the best opportunity to crush him altogether."

"Out upon the sneaking counsel!" cried the host; "when was it known that Dick M'Loughlin took advantage of a foe's misfortune? It's enough that a Connemara-man be in trouble, he has a right to my protection. We'll visit Castle Corrib to-morrow, and see how matters can be made up. And if he is high with me, 'twill be only an exchange of shots upon his battlements, and we'll be the best friends in life after. Hasn't the old smuggler a daughter?"

"Ay, that he has, the pride of Lough Corrib, —beautiful as the leading swan upon the same Lough; and not a jot less proud, or less queen-like. She's the sweet and the sturdy lass;—Od! but she'd have made a second Granawaile in other times than the present. But she is sadly Frenchified. The old man has had her educated over the water, and she is always tripping backwards and forwards in his schooners.

A fig for her manners, however ; her heart and her beauty are Irish, I'll answer for it !”

“ Your description warms me,” replied Dick.

“ It wouldn't be bad speculation for you, neither, M'Loughlin, old bachelor as you are, to make suit to the Corrib princess. Her heritage must be magnificent, and the election would be gained at once by the act.”

“ By Jupiter ! I like the thought well, my veins filled with the factitious youth of Innishowen,—but how tomorrow's sobriety may relish the matter is another thing.”

“ And what's to fright you, M'Loughlin,—a bachelor scarce turned of fifty ? And to whom is this kingdom to go when you are gone ?—Do you ever think of the consequences of your going to kingdom come ?—Why, we'd go to wreck and division, and our independence would be at an end. Oughtn't you to be ashamed to die without giving an heir to Connemara ?”

“ Hout ! M'Manus,” said the monarch ; “ you want to make a downright fool of me : an old man, indeed, to marry a bouncing mermaid like

Agatha O'Lamy—fresh from France, too! the very land, by G——! No, no; if I had a son, then indeed might I propound an alliance between the families!"

"Faith, then, since you have not a son, it's full time for you to be thinking o' one, my old boy."

"I had a son," replied the host, tragically, prompted at once to frankness and pathos by what he called the factitious youth of Innishowen.

"Indeed!" said the astonished courtier.

"I had, in truth and troth," continued Dick, "some six-and-twenty years ago a son, that might this moment, were he here and living, win this Corrib princess, her heritage for himself, and for me the election. But his papist mother disappeared with him, for fear she should suckle a heretic, as she said, knowing that I would rear him, like myself, a loyal man, and a right-blue Christian."

"And have you never since heard tidings of her?"

"Not I,—the witch was drowned, I suppose ;

and yet she was as comely a lass as ever danced at a patron, M'Manus. She stole an hundred ounces of pure Irish gold, and with them the old gold chain that Philip of Spain gave to my ancestor. God forgive me ! I thought more at the time of the yellow gold trinkets she robbed me of, than of the boy she bore away. Heaven has punished my hard-heartedness, and never sent another."

"It's time to decamp, M'Loughlin; for ye're getting crying drunk—lamenting here for a lost by-blow !"

"By-blow !—ye——it was no such thing, Mr. M'Manus ;—married we were tightly, or else it wouldn't have been ; and if it was a by-blow, a bastard of mine's good enough to reign over you ! — Which of our ancestors, I'd like to know, ever waited for the ceremony, or thought of it, unless there happened to be a priest convenient ?"

"Ay, but now-a-days folk begin to talk of such new-fangled things as law and respectability, even in Connemara."

"I tell thee then, M'Manus, I was married,

like a fool, to this black-eyed papist. Were I not, she had still clung round me, perhaps, and left me my child. But they are both gone ; and now I 've confessed to you, let the old tale rest between us."

For some time this conversation had been an unwitnessed dialogue between M'Manus and his patron, the guests who still remained having lost all powers of perception ; and St. Roque had retired without delay to his chamber, overcome by anxiety and fatigue.

CHAPTER VII.

UPON the following morning, enough of the events and topics of the evening lingered in Dick M'Loughlin's head, to make him order horses, and other modes of conveyance, to be prepared for a visit to Castle Corrib. And, after a substantial breakfast, to which not the less justice was done for the preceding night's debauch, such being the impunity of the quaffers of Innishowen, the steeds of the monarch and his suite were bestriden, and urged in the direction of the great smuggler's residence.

This, as its name imported, was situated on Lough Corrib, or rather dominated over it. The castle, for such name it bore with more truth than did Ballycarrigaclunah, crowned a little promontory on the western coast of the

lake. Until of very late years, it had remained a neglected and utter ruin, since the days when it stood its last siege from a Danish or Norwegian navy. Time, however, owing to the imperishability of the ancient cement, had not displaced a stone in all that time; and even the would-be destructive hand of curiosity often found itself unequal to the task. Brian O'Lamy, in whose property it was situated, took it into his head, not long since, to refit and re-establish its splendour;—and to this, as well as to his present mode of life, he had been induced by accident. Prompted by some youthful whim, he had launched, some twenty summers since, a sloop upon the Lough for the idle amusement of sailing merely. By degrees his nautical ardour grew warmer, and, like the navigators of old, he pushed his excursions soon beyond the limits of the lake to Galway bay; thence to the numerous isles that skirt our western coast, and in a memorable hour of adventure, round to Waterford. The attempt was repeated in the stormy season of the year 1802 or 1803, and Brian O'Lamy, his

sloop and crew, found themselves driven out of all their reckonings, far from the coast of the Green Isle, into the open ocean. In despite of the danger, and many days' starvation, Columbus was not a happier man than Brian, when, from the summit of one of the Bay of Biscay's mountain-waves, he descried the coast of France. The little vessel made Bourdeaux; and Brian, in the hospitable intercourse of the half-Irish colony of that city, soon came to mingle the spirit of commerce with the spirit of adventure. Even that first voyage the sloop returned not empty; and the gold its cargo brought O'Lamy upon his return, prompted and enabled him to devote himself to the pursuit,—to a life of adventure and of gain.

In furtherance of his new views, O'Lamy resolved upon rebuilding the ruins of Castle Corrib; and rebuild them, and enlarge them he did, far beyond the dimensions of their proudest day, and on a scale of splendour and expense that was the wonder of the west of Ireland. A deep creek that ran inland to the northward of the castle served as a con-

venient harbour ; the coast was hollowed by the kind hand of Nature into cavern store-houses, equally secret and spacious ; and such was then the state of Connemara, that the world might be considered at an end, if a revenue-officer had been known to penetrate the wild kingdom's boundary. In this happy position, twenty years of uninterrupted smuggling had filled, to overflowing, the coffers of O'Lamy ; and, in truth, the veteran might have compounded with Fortune ;—and instead of being irritated at the present sluice-gate, that peace and government vigilance had shut down upon his resources, he might have paid off his schooners, made a forget and forgive bargain with the law, and lived the remainder of his days in more state and comfort, than ever did Prince of Connaught before him. But a long course of prosperity begets an obstinacy of will, that nothing short of a reverse will subdue.

Our readers have already heard of Agatha, O'Lamy's daughter, and his only child. Report could not exaggerate her beauty ; and as a creature, travelled and educated like her,

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was not to be met with in her native island, no marvel that she appeared a prodigy of excellence in the eyes of the wild youths of condition in her neighbourhood. To most Irish families, Dublin is the nursery of accomplishment, whither young ladies are sent to learn elegance; but O'Lamy had always, and especially at first, a suspicion of the Irish metropolis, and the great powers there resident; so that he preferred his beloved Bourdeaux as a place of education for his daughter. Thither Agatha was despatched early for the purpose of learning female humanities; and although she had been frequently home since, a month's voyage over the Bay of Biscay being then considered nothing by the family, she had spent the most part of her youth among the gay vineyards, and gayer society of Languedoc.

Born, rocked, and reared amidst the wilds and winds, inured to brave the perils of the ocean, as well as the superadded perils of her father's trade, Agatha was a bold maiden, with a tinge of the heroic in her disposition: her French education, too, had not a little added

to her independence of character and feeling ; and the total absence of all timidity in her bearing, though its place was unsupplied by either assurance or presumption, was what, in woman, appeared to Hibernian beaux a marvel and a prodigy. Educated, too, in a foreign land at enmity with the government that ruled her own, a little political prejudice could not be prevented from mingling with her thoughts ; —dreams of Irish independence often occupied the visions of the maiden, that ought to have been filled, and, indeed, that were so partially, with softer thoughts, of more becoming interest to her, as troublous perhaps, but more worthy and more capable of being realized.

Such was the maiden whom Mr. M'Manus recommended to the addresses of Dick M'Loughlin ; and Dick, though he protested against the absurdity of his entertaining such an idea at his time of life, did at the very time feel that very idea tickling the soft side of his heart. It was politic too, and his interest demanded it ; —there is nothing man delights in so much, as to cover a silly, real motive with

a solid, but uninfluencing pretext. The pretext in this case, thought Dick, will screen me at least from the ridicule of the knowing; and all the long slumbering dreams of his early Bachelordom were summoned from their cells, at the thoughts of a young bride. His sleep, even that night, was not so deep as his deep draughts seem to have ensured. That one word of M^cManus's was more powerful than all his potations; even the soporifics of whiskey were routed by the train of cogitations it produced; or that mighty spirit was compelled to aid the force and variety of such cogitations by all its power of fever and excitement. Homer never pestered Agamemnon with more dreams, than this hint of M^cManus's did the Connemara monarch withal. Three times did he turn upon his pillow ere he conquered a partial repose; and afterwards, the twist and turns of his uneasiness were as impossible to enumerate, as the crotchets of his brain.

We have already seen the effects of this in the order issued by Dick immediately on his

uprising, and during the long space of our narration since the monarch may be considered as upon his ride. His accompaniment was, for the present, not numerous: whether it was that his suite dreaded the frowns of the angry O'Lamy, or that more engaging sport occupied them. M^cManus, however, rode by the side of his patron; and St. Roque took good care not to be left behind in an expedition to Castle Corrib. M^cManus took this opportunity of again impressing his counsel, which was heard and combated with great internal pleasure by him to whom it was offered. St. Roque, for his part, trotted on a solitary path, lost in hopes and fears and redoubled anxieties:—the French youth little dreaming of the plans that his host was mooting; and his host all as little suspecting the hopes of the Frenchman,—both a world from supposing that they could possibly thwart one another.

It is needless to depict the varying view presented during this ride; the personages of my tale never once disturbed their deep thoughts by a glance, for all the beauty of the

mountain line that traverses the north of Connemara. Even St. Roque, who might be supposed to interest himself in the novel scene, was too anxious for external observation, until Lough Corrib presented at once to their view its expanse slightly ruffled; calmly laving, however, its western shore; whilst upon the eastern, it beat up the cliffs in deep foam, visible from the opposite side. The path they followed stretched to the edge of the lake, and then skirted round it, displaying Castle Corrib on its promontory, or rather its peninsula; for so deep was the natural fosse by which it was insulated from the land, that a narrow parapet, raised for the purpose, served as the only mode of entrance. A drawbridge would at once have been more secure, either for friends or against enemies; but Irish architecture and engineering thought otherwise, and the steed of a visitor could approach the castle portal but by this narrow and frightful path.

The approach of the party was, evidently, not unobserved by the garrison of the castle, whose look out, at the time, was vigilant and

anxious. Spy-glasses were directed against them from the windows, and petararoes from the walls, to ascertain the comers, and to warn them of what they might expect if their approach was hostile. The figure of O'Lamy himself was soon visible upon the battlements; he recognized at once the monarch of Connemara; and instantly, bells and vociferous orders announced more friendly tokens of reception. As none of the party were bold enough to urge their steeds along the fearful parapet,—a feat often and safely performed by the sure-footed ponies of the district,—a domestic came forth, took the steeds of M^cLoughlin and his suite, and disappeared with them down a subterraneous passage. Even upon the sure support of one's own footing, the entrance to the Castle was perilously inconvenient; and the monarch was preparing to expostulate immediately with O'Lamy on the point, till he recollected the gravity of their respective characters, the pique of O'Lamy against him, and the serious points of difference that might be between them.

As a feudal baron of the twelfth century may be supposed to have received within his walls the liege lord that he feared and disliked, so did Brian O'Lamy receive M'Loughlin upon his threshold. The extent of the smuggler's pride may be judged from its proceeding from two most virulent sources,—his purse and his Irish blood. In any other quarter of the globe, this, joined with the cause of pique above described, would have prompted him to display at once contempt and hatred of his present visitor ;—but so much majesty “doth hedge a king,” that here, within the precincts of Connemara, even though within his own castle, O'Lamy felt awed by the presence of a superior potentate, and covered, at once, all churlishness beneath the opposite extreme of French politeness. Now this was the very behaviour that King M'Loughlin abhorred above all others ; not only because he knew it to be insincere, but that he knew not how to reply to it, except by an awkward succession of bows and forced smiles of ghastliness, that caused himself to feel insincere and ill at ease.

“ If you make one more bow, O’Lamy,” said Dick, wroth at the tenth stoop he was compelled to reply to, “ I ’ll turn back over that infernal parapet of yours to Ballycarrigachunah.”

O’Lamy smiled, and said, he “thought Mr. Mc’Loughlin was a courtier!”

“ A voting, but not a levee one, Sir. Zounds! how sharp at repartee your French trips have made you! Now, hark ye!—I am on your stair, and before I mount a step higher, or take bite or sup with you, let us understand each other. You’re an Irish smuggler, —I’m an Irish—what-you-will,—so let us speak Irish; that is, the language of downright sincerity!—none of your irony and dissembling! If you are friendly, tell me so with an oath, not a smile; and if you have a mind to scold,—why, scold out, in the name of St. Patrick! ’Tis’ only jackanapes that fear the last comfortable way of settling a quarrel, that measure words, and are skilled in the art of bandying them.”

“ Agreed, on the smuggler’s part,” said the owner of Castle Corrib. “ Allow me to introduce you to my daughter.”

Agatha rose, and received the visitors with the ease and courtesy of a woman of the world. St. Roque happened to be the hindmost of the party ; and the blood rushed to the young lady's cheek, as she perceived him enter. Her father stared at the sudden instance of emotion ; but a second's space restored her self-possession.

" *Ma foi!*" exclaimed the maiden ; " a French figure and countenance in Castle Corrib startled me—I cannot be mistaken—this gentleman, Mr. McLoughlin, is a foreigner ?"

" That he is, Madam ; let me name him to you as Captain St. Roque ; a friend, O'Lamy, of our old friend Arthur's !"

" Doubly welcome here," said O'Lamy, extending his hand, " both as a Frenchman and a friend of Arthur's !"

Here the porter of the castle made his appearance with a countenance of most comical perplexity. " What's the matter now, Shamus ?"

" Nothing, your honour, but the fat gentleman's in a takin !"

" What fat gentleman ?"

" Oh ! fat Arthur Kelly, by Jupiter!—he

rode here with us, where is he?—sure, he has not fallen down the precipice?”

“Not he, troth,” said Shamus; “he wouldn’t as much as look at it.”

Dick, M^cManus, and O’Lamy hurried out, and from a kind of loop-hole window that commanded the entrance, poor Arthur was seen wringing his hands in dismay, evidently fearing to trust himself upon the parapet, and in equal consternation at being thus excluded from the luncheon, that his heart had been set on for the last five miles of ride. And truly his timidity seemed not altogether causeless; for had he attempted to cross the parapet, his expansive stomach would certainly have protruded half a foot on each side of it.

Merry all of them, at the expense of poor Arthur’s perplexity, they hurried out at once to enjoy and release him from it, leaving the Languedocian captain to inform the fair Agatha, not of the cause, for that were needless, but of the means and pretext of his present coming. Ernest, as our readers have of course long since discovered, was known to, and enamoured

of Agatha O'Lamy at a previous period. He first saw her when his regiment passed through Bourdeaux on its march to Spain; and upon his return, a sick and wounded sufferer, he had experienced from the family in which she resided, and especially from her, the kindest marks of sympathy and attention. A wounded warrior, like him, brave and handsome, was not to be commiserated by a young lady with impunity, either to her or to himself; and after the anxious time usually devoted to incipient sighs and glances, the tale usual in such cases was whispered artfully, and could not fail to make impression on the heart of Agatha. Other than a warrior, her spirit had not stooped to love; and so partial was she, by nature, to "deeds of arms" and its profession, that the mustachios of the soldier would have compensated with her ever so much irregularity of feature. It happened here, however, that a handsome person was thrown into the scale; and to Ernest St. Roque she was, from all these powerful reasons, devoted utterly. His absence and sufferings in subsequent campaigns served naturally but to root

her affection deeper ; and the late reverses, that concluded the French soldier's career of glory, and worse than annihilated their once mighty leader, inspired in the bosom of the generous Agatha a deeper interest, than she felt ever excited by the loud tidings of the victories in which her lover had shared.

“ *Ernest !* ”

“ *Ma chère Agathe !* ”

Without the tone, the feature, the quivering nerve, and faltering voice, how feeble is the written language of love ! Its soft pleadings, its tender dialogue, nay, the very eloquence of its passion is, in word at least, so simple, that the page of Rousseau even doth but mar the effect ! Let us, then, pass over the first tender moments of their colloquy.

“ How ! ” exclaimed St. Roque at some remark of Agatha's, “ have you been in the south so lately ? ”

“ But just returned last night. ”

“ Last night ? ”

“ In one of my father's vessels ; and a won-

derful escape we had, Ernest ; but I must tell you."

" You need not, I know it all."

" How, Ernest, in the name of wonder?"

" I saw myself the chase, the combat — you, Agatha, my little thoughtless heroine, amidst the fire. Is it not enough for one of us to follow the profession of arms?"

" *Oui, mon cher Ernest, mais —*"

And the entrance of her father with M^cLoughlin and his fat follower, safe and sound, silenced further conversation.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE monarch of Connemara and Brian O'Lamy stood upon the battlements of Castle Corrib alone, for the purpose of serious conversation.

"Brian, my man," said Dick, "you've got into a mighty pretty scrape!"

"Not a doubt of it," replied the other; "but it should have come to this at last, and sooner or later I expected it. The first taste they e'er got of Brian is pretty well—a ship and ship's crew lost! What can their vengeance effect in return, except battering these walls back into their old state? As to me, I move inland among the bogs; and, I warrant, they'll not find a red-coat daring enough to attempt an invasion."

“Invasion!—an invasion of Connemara!” said Dick, taking a huge pinch of snuff, which, unless upon hearing such monstrous suppositions as this, he never indulged in before dinner; “the bittern and the curlew would chirrup an answer to that tune. My friend, the collector and prime magistrate of Galway, knows us and our land too well to send soldiers upon such a fool’s errand. Shall I tell you the mighty force that sage man will employ?”

“I should have no objection to hear.”

“Then hear!—One single spalpeen, armed with one single line on paper, to Ballycarrigacloonah, acquainting the Lord thereof of thy misdoings, Mr. Brian; and praying him, as a liege and loyal chieftain, to compass for his British Majesty that which his forces could not effect—punishment upon the offender.”

Every drop of angry blood in O’Lamy’s body visited his face at this speech. Still the person and the time required dissimulation. He leaned from the battlements, spat twice, thrice, a portion of his choler forth, and having digested the

rest, he turned to McLoughlin and demanded,
“What then?”

“Then—why the answer and the action must depend upon the humour of the said chieftain, which may be difficult to answer for. His word is a law in these wilds; you allow that, I hope, Mr. O’Lamy?”

“It might, truly, with the English and Irish Governments at its back, be hard to withstand it, even here,” replied O’Lamy, coolly, “and, therefore, question its power I do not.”

“Wisely said, — French diplomacy,” continued Dick. “And now, suppose the answer returned to the Galwegian magistrate was, that the election of a true and loyal member for the county was more important to Government, than the prosecution of navy and revenue-vengeance, would I have reason to think the cause of that loyal candidate materially advanced by the reply?”

“That is coming to the point,” quoth O’Lamy;
“good Irish diplomacy to wit!”

“Could I have arrived at it by a path more direct?”

“ Perhaps not. But the fact is, Mr. Mc'Loughlin, I have promised —— to rest neutral, at least in the election. It is the least compliment I could pay him. Besides, after all, how very few votes have I! My freeholds have been long at sea.”

“ And now very likely to go to wreck by sea and land, if these counsels stand, Mr. O'Lamy. But as to votes, bless you! it is not those I want—I can make votes, and multiply them. It is the support of a good body of stout cudgel-players, not only to vote themselves, for that's a trifle in the business, but to bend in the brain-pans of any hostile voters that dare enter the town. In a word, I want your smuggling gang to keep a barricade in my interest.”

“ This would be a more enormous breach of the law, Mr. Mc'Loughlin, than any they can charge me with.”

“ A breach in the body of the law to support its spirit—Who dare complain?”

“ The beaten candidates—they'll petition!”

“ Petition!—is it with a couple of ounces of

cold lead in their bodies?—Besides, who ever heard of a Galwegian seeking redress out of his own county?"

"And suppose yourself, Mr. M'Loughlin, the gentleman supplied with this cold lead?"

"And suppose it again—what properer death can a Galwegian die?"

"But now, whom do you think really to have the greatest chance of success?"

"The survivor!"

The audacity, the illegality of this mode of electioneering tickled the old smuggler.—It was a way after his own heart.

"The coffins are bought," continued Dick ;
"the pistols loaded. I've a stout nerve, and a steady hand—look at it—steady as your petararo ;—What-d'ye-call-um's a drunken sot—whiskey has given his wrist the ague. Choose betwixt us, Brian O'Lamy!"

"Interest and inclination both prompt me to join hands with you, M'Loughlin. But one circumstance forbids, and it cannot be got over."

"Cannot!—what a word for a smuggler and

a Connemara chieftain ! Render up this *cannot*, and I'll solve it in a thrice !”

“ Quite beyond your Majesty's omnipotency,” said O'Lamy ; “ 'tis an affair of the heart !”

“ Majesty fiddlestick !—what is it ? I'm the boy for every thing touching the heart !”

“ Young—— proposes for my Agatha, and I must support his father !”

“ Poh !—he's no catch for Agatha !”

“ I beg your pardon, Mr. M'Loughlin.”

“ I'll find you a better in a twinkling !”

“ Whom ?”

“ Myself !”

“ Come, Mr. M'Loughlin, this is no subject for a jest; and even the important interests of an election cannot excuse it.”

“ By the powers of Moll Kelly ! Brian O'Lamy, I'm in the very essence of earnest.”

“ The king of Connemara marry the smuggler's daughter, Agatha ?”

“ Yes, verily, the king himself,—but bring not smuggler into the question;—I know the O'Lamy pedigree as far back as Milesius.

I'm but a man of yesterday myself, compared with it. So, by the purgatory of St. Patrick ! Brian, I am serious, and repeat my offer."

"Oh !" uttered O'Lamy, in a long and many-toned exclamation, and he walked up and down the battlement in a state of pleased incredulity. O'Lamy, from his continental connexion, had acquired some French ideas respecting the right of parents to arrange these matters for their children ; and it would have surprised him not a little to learn then, that his daughter had remained so Irish, as to have even gone so far as to make a choice for herself. On this point, for the present, his ignorance left him no cause of uneasiness ; and he internally closed with the monarch's offer in the height of gladness. It was by far the finest match for her in the west of Ireland ; and although King McLoughlin " was somewhat descended into the vale of years," still continuing to feel continually, that, too, was all the better.

Whilst this, and further conversation passed between the two politic heads upon the battle-

ments, M^cManus, St. Roque, Arthur Kelly, and the rest of the suite, were amusing themselves, and Miss Agatha, as best they might; the Frenchman affecting to be now, for the first time, forming his acquaintance with that lady. The conversation turned on France, and the prodigies which Miss O'Lamy gravely passed as truth upon these Irish courtiers, kept St. Roque in a continued state of amusement, seldom short of downright laughter. They were at length joined by the elders; and M^cManus marked with delight the gladness and amity that seemed to reign in the countenances of his patron and his present host.

The great business of feasting and jollity was of course attended to in Corrib Castle, as well as in that of Ballycarrigaclunah. And when the company were gathered round the smoking board, less fearfully attended certainly than M^cLoughlin's table, numbers of expletive guests still made their appearance, with mention of whom I should but burden and perplex my narrative. By a new care on

the part of O'Lamy, undividable by the fair Agatha, the Connemara monarch was assigned a seat by her; while St. Roque, in spite of his tacit and sidelong look of remonstrance, was unpitiously banished to a distant corner of the table.

Dick McLoughlin, like his countrymen in general, was of that species of lover, that scorns to steal into a lady's heart; and who in love's warfare prefers the open escalade or assault, to mining or any such tedious and insidious attack. Accordingly, Dick opened no trenches in his freshly-conceived enterprise, but advanced boldly, in the *pas de charge* of compliment and attention, to carry the heart of Agatha. Chivalrously polite to the fair the Connemara monarch had ever been; but there was an earnestness, an enthusiasm, a self-oblivion, amounting at times to the ridiculous, in Dick's present attentions to Miss O'Lamy, that at once attracted the suspicions both of the maiden herself and the whole company. McManus observed it with pleasure, O'Lamy

with similar feelings, St. Roque with rage, and Agatha, and the rest of the party, in the most utter astonishment.

“He’s a bould man, M^cLoughlin,” said Arthur Kelly to M^cManus, “to be getting so soft on the girls at his years.”

“Would you have him begin later, Arthur?”

“By my conscience, would I not! and right well he seems inclined to lose no more time. The very look of him would melt a pound of fresh butter. Miss Agatha couldn’t withstand such coortin’ as that long. Od! M^cManus, if he makes such a fool o’ himself sober, what will he be drunk?”

“Mr. Kelly, some Sauterne?” said O’Lamy.

“No salt-herrin’ for me,” answered Arthur; “thirst’s a companion of mine, that never requires a hint of the kind.”

“But you mistake—this is good liquor.”

“The best of thanks, Mr. O’Lamy,—none of the pickle neither,—it mightn’t agree with my stomach, which is a queer one, with queer likings.” And the fat man filled his rummer.

with claret, as a protest against the recommended herring-pickle.

Dinner was at last over; and Agatha escaped from M'Loughlin's persecution, to indulge in at least an half-hour's uninterrupted burst of laughter. The monarch, in fact, had run upon a shoal;—not another girl in Connaught, save Agatha O'Lamy, could, perhaps, have resisted his grandeur and importunities. But she had that touch of the female devil (pardon the indecorous, but innocently-meant expression) in her disposition, that made her delight in playing and tormenting the monster, that, in the shape of a lover, she had so unexpectedly hooked. Here her French education stood her friend in need, and taught her to be perfectly at ease as the object of such importunities, which would have set the simple Irish female distracted;—and a woman that can command her self-possession, while an adorer, that even she despises, is at her feet, forms the most capricious and torturing despot that ever knee knelt to.

While the fair Agatha was enjoying a laugh at her new lover's expense, so certain was he himself, as well as O'Lamy, of the result they had settled upon, that no reserve on the subject was considered as at all necessary. Jests and quizzes on the happy suitor circulated round the table, enjoyed by the object of them, as much as all of their meaning that reached him, struck as a poniard on the heart of St. Roque. The health even of the new queen was proposed by the sanguine O'Lamy, echoed by the monarch and his suite; and the first burst of after-dinner converse was gladness and exultation.

A little sail-boat that had shot up the lake, and had but just arrived, bore tidings from the town, that turned awhile their mirth to gravity. All the disposable maritime force of Galway (a few gun-boats) had been ordered to scour Lough Corrib; to enter and search all likely places of contraband concealment, and, above all, Castle Corrib. O'Lamy drove his fist against his oaken table, and swore defiance:

well he might, indeed, for his force was far superior to any that could be brought against him. The monarch, however, recommended pacific counsels; and he vowed, that if more blood was split, it would be impossible to preserve Connemara, independent of the law, and its host. O'Lamy vowed there was but a single schooner in Corrib creek; the rest were afloat or in harbour on the Atlantic coast.—“And goods?”—“Safe enough in the crypts of Corrib, where gun-brig's crew dare never enter.”—“Send the solitary schooner off to-night. Evacuate the castle betimes on the morrow, leave its gates wide open to all comers and searchers, with Shamus for the whole garrison,—you're inland—gone upon a journey—what you will,—and leave the rest to me.” Such was the advice of M'Loughlin, and, in the end, O'Lamy, though reluctant, deemed it best to acquiesce.

Whiskey did not make its appearance at the table of O'Lamy, although it often does in Ireland at those of Peers of the land; and, as to the claret, “a body might drink this stuff till

morning," as Arthur Kelly observed, "and grow but the soberer upon it." The sitting was, in consequence, not deferred till any late hour; the more so, as Dick was bent on prosecuting his suit that evening to better advantage, as he thought, under the benign influence of Bourdeaux.

"Come, my dear Agatha," said O'Lamy, as the gentlemen re-entered the drawing-room, "'tis out of compliment to you, and you alone, that we have all forsaken the bottle. Let's get rid of this coffee in a thrice, and you will give us a tune on the guitar?"

"'Tis so long since I have touched, or even seen it, father," replied Agatha, "that I doubt much my capability of affording any delight to these gentlemen."

"Delight!—you are the very queen of it speaking! and singing you are the goddess of—"

"Of what, Mr. M'Loughlin?"

"Of what you please;—sing on, my beauty."

"Come, Mr. M'Loughlin, none of your Irish compliments, with their superlative foot foremost, dragging a lame one after it."

“ Never fear, the next shall be better. I always founder in that curst mythology. And now for *Gra ma chree*, or *Cean dubh delish*.”

Agatha took up her guitar ; but, instead of the beautiful Irish melody that the amorous monarch was expecting, she played, for Ernest’s reassurance and consolation, a beautiful Bolero air, to which they had long since danced and sung in the gay vineyards of Languedoc. As very few of my readers can possibly have heard this beautiful little Spanish air, I take the liberty of dotting down its burden on this page. The words begin, *Maria, Maria*.



The first notes were sufficient to lull all the disquiet of St. Roque ; Dick was only half

delighted, and clamoured for his *Gra ma chree Molly*; and Agatha gratified him to the annoyance no longer of the Frenchman's heart, but his ears. As to the monarch, love, wine, and music quite overpowered him, and he committed more extravagancies, than I could possible transcribe.

“ One bit of a word with you, sweet pearl of Corrib !”

“ Is it to be tender, Mr. M'Loughlin ?”

The monarch laid his hand upon his breast.

“ As I am a princess,” quoth Agatha, “ I have vowed never to receive a suitor but in open court, and on his bended knees.”

Dick sunk upon the floor: and St. Roque ran both hands through his locks, as he paced up and down in agitation and anger.

“ What have you to say for yourself, now, O King ?”

“ Simply, fair Princess, that my heart is splitting, going to very pieces for the love of you. And all I have to ask is; that you'll take pity on me, and marry me to-morrow.”

"*Ma foi, que ce Roi prend le Roman par la queue!*" exclaimed St. Roque.

"Damn the Roman and his cue! what are they to us?"

"Good gallant, mind your affair, and give me some proper reason why I should marry thee to-morrow."

"What more would you have? Am I not a king?—the king of Connemara—up to my ears in love."

"And years."

"In good hale condition."

"In drink."

"In power."

"In debt."

"Mocking's catching, Princess."

"Thou must mock harder, then, I promise ye, ere thou canst catch me."

Dick seized the hand of Agatha, kissed it, stood up, and exclaimed, "Blessings on your kind heart! I thank it for granting me my wish so soon. O'Lamy, the fair Agatha consents to be my bride to-morrow."

"That will she," said O'Lamy; "for all her jesting, she has ever been a dutiful girl."

"That will I not!" said Agatha.

"Never say a word more about it, my darling; it's all settled," cried the monarch humming; "I'll marry yourself, and no other, and afterwards ask your consent."

"But, father—"

"But, daughter."

"What do you mean?"

"We all mean what we say."

"This royal friend of yours is in earnest?"

"It's I that will teach your pretty lips that," said Dick.

"But to-morrow, M'Loughlin, we must flit; let it be the next day?"

"Well be it so," said M'Loughlin; "but one day more I will not wait, for all the powers of Galway or of Connaught!"

"Would you marry me by force, Sir?" said Agatha, getting really alarmed.

"By my soul, and that I would!—sure it's always the way we do the thing here."

The face of Agatha waxed purple with indignation; but her words and looks of anger were alike thrown away upon the comic firmness of her most regal suitor. Her resentment was every moment checked by a laugh,—yet the laugh was unseasonable; and between mirth and gravity she knew not well what to think of the scene. As to Dick M'Loughlin, he not only seemed, but was in earnest. He had not the slightest idea of any living creature daring to rebel against his will in Connemara; and the fair Agatha, in imagination, was already his spouse. Absolute violence, of course, he never dreamed of.—“She’ll take it all easy enough at the altar,” thought Dick. “She is not the first woman I have known to be dragged there, who suffered the knot to be tied, merely to avoid the trouble of making a noise.”

Agatha retired with mingled sensations of mirth, vexation, and fear, resolved to slay Dick with her own good scissors, if he dared to press his nonsense further;—the next moment the whole seemed a joke, and she laughed loud

and repeatedly;—and again her fears of Dick's persecution recurred in full force.

St. Roque determined in his own mind, that Ireland was the strangest country under the sun; and the Frenchman was right.

CHAPTER IX.

PURSUANT to the counsel of the monarch, O'Lamy determined upon evacuating Castle Corrib instantly, and leaving it pervious and accessible to all comers on the strength of his British Majesty's warrant or commission; hoping that by this submission of his towers of strength to the law, he should make some amends for the bold resistance and successful flight of the schooner, which, we may say, the gallant Agatha had fought and saved. In order to superintend the troublesome work of moving, the carrying off of every thing suspicious, and the secreting of all that could not be removed, the smuggler chief was up and employed throughout the night. And at cock-crow the garrison, including visitors, were awakened, in order that the

castle might be evacuated in time, and O'Lamy and his goods be beyond the reach of the boldest incursion that a revenue gang could make into the inland wilds of Connemara. It was O'Lamy's intention to pitch his tent, as he said, in his old four walls, at Drimdarrogh,—the paternal hovel of his sires, that he had now many years abandoned for wealth, smuggling, and Castle Corrib.

Arthur Kelly groaned in spirit at this matutinal rising, which he was however consoled for, on finding the remnants of some of yesterday's most substantial joints spread forth for breakfast, with never-failing Bourdeaux to wash it down; and O'Lamy pressed him to an ample morning draught; since much, that could not be hidden or borne away, was to be inexorably poured into the Lough. This cruel necessity seemed more tragic to Arthur, than could be the most pathetic catastrophe in the scene of *Southerne* or of *Otway*. But 'twas irremediable.

As the sun shed his first rays on the rocks of Corrib, every inhabitant, except old Shamus, quitted the castle. O'Lamy delivered his

final instructions to the porter, who winked his intentions of being even with any visitors coming on the unwelcome errand expected. Agatha, mounted on the most beautiful specimen of the poney kind that St. Roque had yet seen in the wilds, was turning a deaf ear to the gallantry of M^cLoughlin, and uttering, at the same time, the tenderest things possible to the Frenchman, though with so unmoved and grave a countenance, that the monarch was unable even to suspect its drift. The latter repeated his intentions of visiting Drimdarrogh on the morrow, in the character of a bridegroom ; and Agatha replied, “ the more ridiculous he made himself, the better sport for the beholders.” Even M^cManus began to entertain doubts of the final success of his patron’s wooing.

With a proper quantity of adieus, O’Lamy and Agatha parted from the monarch and his suite, who wended back their way by the road of yesterday to Ballycarrigaclunah. This *soi-disant* castle was the scene of some especial agitation, as was evident upon the monarch’s approach. An immense crowd had gathered to-

gether, well armed with their beloved cudgels, although their tongues, as yet, were the only weapons in motion, and these were certainly most actively employed. Upon Dick's inquiring the cause of all this, he was asked in answer, by one of his principal household officers, if he had not received a letter despatched on the preceding evening. Dick had never heard of it. The gossoon who bore it must have been intercepted by drowning or drink. "And what was it?" inquired Dick.

"A letter from Galway, your honour, on some terrible business, for the man rode for his very life; and I sent it to Castle Corrib immediately."

"Fire and fury!" cried the monarch, "bestir yourself, find the young rascal and the letter within half an hour, or I'll put half a dozen of you standing on your heads in the lough yonder, to cool them for the future. And what's this crowd about?"

"Sure, an' the souldiers are a' comin' into Connemara."

"The soldiers!"

“Ay, in troth! the hundred and worst; comin’ to take O’Lamy and us all, and clap us in Galway jail, if it’ll hould us.”

The monarch was petrified with annoyance, indignation, and amazement. The young miching messenger was at last discovered. He had been to Castle Corrib in the morning, unwilling to face the bogs and fairies by night; and “Sorrow a one could he see there,” he said, “barrin Shamus;” and as his path was of course a straighter line than the road, he had missed the party returning. Dick opened the despatch, which bore—

“Dear M^cLoughlin,

“There has been a brig lost in combat and pursuit of the old fox of Corrib, and, ’tis likely, owing to the loss of the better part of the brig’s crew by the smuggler’s shot. *Our* party here are loud in indignation, and, backed by the naval and revenue folks, make such an outcry, that I must exert myself. You know how dangerous at *this* moment, lukewarmness would appear; the election’s Wednesday, &c. ’Tis

better for you to surrender the smuggling schooner, at least, to the cry for vengeance; otherwise I cannot prevent an invasion, which our friend, Peter O'Shaughnessy of the hundred-and-first, is bent on. He swears that more than half of the regiment have deserted into your wilds, and he is resolved to pick up and punish the fellows; being ambitious also to emulate Cæsar in having conquered and invaded your independent kingdom. He'll march to-morrow, unless we hear from you to-night;—he will not be persuaded of the peril and impracticability of his enterprise. Pray be merciful, and prevent him and his men from being knocked on the head,—a certainty, should your puissance not interfere.

By way of postscript to this agreeable epistle, a crowd of scouts came to inform Dick M'Loughlin of the threatened approach of the military. It was a cruel position for a loyal chieftain, like him;—he was obliged peremptorily to oppose the king's forces with his own.

The issue of such an encounter he could easily foresee: although his followers were armed but with clubs, still their numbers, agility, ferocity, and knowledge of the ground, left no doubt of the hundred and first's discomfiture. Now Dick loved fighting dearly, in any shape, except bull-baiting, but his loyalty outbalanced his pugnacity.

The monarch sat upon his steed, taking a mootatory pinch of snuff, like Napoleon, surrounded by his troops. And in a thrice, even in the moment of that pinch, Dick, as generalissimo, formed his plan.

"Begone!" said he to his impatient men-at-clubs, "get back to the bogs; but send me, each man of you, his wife in his stead. We'll show the Galwegians how the men of Connemara treat invaders:—they send their wives, with distaffs and broom-handles, to beat them out of the land. That, and a little hunger, and bog-marching, shall do the red-coats' business. Disperse!" cried the monarch in Irish. And the crowd, mad as they were to immolate the sacrilegious invaders of their wilds, dispersed

at the command of their leader, without a murmur, to do his bidding.

Who has not heard of the gallant and original Peter O'Shaughnessy, that commanded the hundred-and-first in this memorable expedition? Who has not marked his strut down Bond-street, tightly laced by the trappings of his military coat, till the ample casing of his ribs threatened to make its appearance abruptly through the stretched surtout? Peter was comely, and believed every woman that looked at him, in love with him. The Duchess of Oldenburg, when here, *did* look from the windows of the Pulteney Hotel down upon him, nor could she refrain from laughing at the impertinence with which he nodded to her. It was quite enough for Peter,—he thought his fortune secured, and dubbed himself a Prince of Siberia at once. He besought an audience of the Duchess, who granted it; and Peter, to the very great astonishment both of the princess and the interpreter that was obliged to be present, laid his Irish heart and person at the feet of the Russian Duchess. She

thought he must be mad ; he vowed he was so, with love of her. She ran away from his importunities ; and Peter returned to his friends to tell the story, declaring that nothing but his ignorance of that damned French prevented him from gaining his point. "The interpreter spoiled all," said Peter.

Such was the mover and leader of the expedition against Connemara. Boats were at the same time despatched against Castle Corrib ; but they were certain that the birds they sought would have flown long before to a securer nest. Major O'Shaughnessy's force might amount to about three hundred men ; a force, he thought, sufficient to subdue a much more extensive kingdom than he was about to invade. They carried with them, too, a day's provision ; food for the morrow he reckoned on procuring with ease, and two days were to suffice for the ample conquest of the kingdom, and capture of O'Lamy and his stores.

Peter, in the first instance, directed his march on Ballycarrigaclunah, which he reached without opposition ; not encountering, indeed,

a living being on his passage. His approach to the castle, for the sake of good-naturedly consulting with Dick upon the best mode of subduing that monarch's proper kingdom, was interrupted by the personage himself; who, alone, and very coolly leaning over one of his own closed gates, stopped the march of the Major. Dick considered Peter's conduct as in the highest degree uncivil, considering that his house was ever an open one to the military, and Peter himself an old companion of his, and chosen guest. The monarch would have mortgaged his driest acre at the moment to have had a fair shot at Peter, with the regular interval of eight paces between them; but electioneering times demand smiling faces, and dissimulation.

"I'm just come to consult you, Mr. Mc'Loughlin," said Major O'Shaughnessy, "as to the best mode of securing one Brian O'Lamy, a smuggling freebooter in these parts, and to beg your co-operation in the enterprise."

"I've something else to do, Peter, than recruiting for you at present. O'Lamy you'll find, I suppose, at Castle Corrib."

"The boats have frightened him from hence these many hours."

"Then you'll find him inland."

"Ay! but the way, Mr. M'Loughlin; instruct us now, were it but for my reputation sake;—what would be said if Peter O'Shaughnessy was foiled in an expedition?"

"I can't, for the life of me, imagine!" replied Dick; "but have you no guide?"

"Guide!—the devil a two-legged creature is here to be seen; much less caught; and the fellows who did chance to know the ground have deserted."

"And have you not a compass?"

"In the name of St. Patrick! what for?"

"To steer by through the bogs.—Do you think ye can direct your course by the rushes, or the swamps?—and stars there are none."

Peter looked bewildered and irresolute.

"But come, I'll do my best to direct you," said the chieftain, as he led the troops to the summit of an hill, not distant from Bally-carrigaclunah.

"Do you see that bog?" said Dick.

"I see nothing but it," replied Peter.

"You must march across it."

"Impossible!—is there no road?"

"Who the deuce wants, or would go to the trouble of making such a thing here? You need not fear in the least; I've crossed myself often, and never sunk deeper than up to my middle."

Peter looked down at his good gray overalls in dismay; as much as to say, good-bye to you at any rate.

"After you pass the bog," continued Dick, "you'll come into long heath—there are some hundred paths—choose any of them—they'll bring you to the lakes, which you may ford, if you know the spots, if not, swim them;—and those over, you are amongst the mountains, and may begin your search."

"Thank you kindly, king M'Loughlin," said Peter O'Shaughnessy, who began to suspect the friendly wishes and embarrassing guidance of the monarch. "We are in for it, and must go on."

There was really, however, no other path than

that which Dick had recommended ; and Major Peter was obliged to take it, to the great disorder of his ranks, and to the destruction of the gaiters and other nether garments of his troops. Dick from his post enjoyed the sight vastly of the scattered soldiers,—here labouring on, there stuck, like comfit-figures upon a twelfth-cake ; Peter himself at their head, in vain looking for the dry *shore* of heath in the horizon that he had been taught to expect. The Major, however, did reach this at last, *minus* some fifty men left sticking, and these he was compelled to abandon.

On marched the intrepid warrior over the heath, till the next impediment was encountered in the shape of broad lakes, all united in line by rivers narrower certainly, but far more deep and rapid than the broad sheets of water they connected. Not a boat was visible on either side, so that fording was the only mode practicable. After two hours' experiment, a ford was declared to be discovered, and the little army proceeded to cross it. Chilled, and fatigued, and weighed down with their arms and accoutrements, the

passage was effected in disorder,—the greater, as no sign even of an enemy had appeared. Ere the foremost man was clear of the water, the long, invisible enemy at length made their abrupt appearance; and rushed to the attack with Irish howling, exclamation, song, and laughter. The soldiers presented their pieces, but shouldered them once more on perceiving the hostile band composed entirely of women, who advanced more to *fraternize*, as the French would say, with them, than to oppose. Their onset was thus unopposed, and the stout wenches were in an instant mingled with the military, even in the deep water. By different soldiers they were received with different welcome; but the result and victory were the same in all cases:—those who allowed them to approach amicably, had their cartridges priggled cunningly from their cases, and flung into the lake;—those who, on the contrary, opposed, were themselves, arms and person, immersed in the struggle. And after some ten minutes, during which this most extraordinary combat lasted, the female battalion retreated, clapping

their hands, defying, and exulting in having put it out of the enemy's power to fire a single shot, with their bayonets for their only defence.

Thenceforward, the men of Connemara began to show themselves on all points and in all directions; menacing in gesture perhaps, but nothing more. If the military in a body advanced towards any of them, they retired;—if an advanced-guard, or straggling soldier, they stood their ground, and devoured him with their eyes; evidently prohibited by nothing, except a superior's command, from taking the vengeance that now seemed in their power to take upon their impertinent invaders. Nevertheless, Major O'Shaughnessy encountered no further open opposition. He marched and counter-marched, up one valley and down another;—every cabin was deserted, every pasture without an animal, and all provisions secreted. He penetrated even to Drimdarrogh, but the walls were left bare at his approach; O'Lamy and Agatha retiring

before him, in no trepidation whatever, to no very distant shelter. Peter puffed and perspired, all in vain. He was forced to take up his quarters for the night at Drimdarrogh, uncomfortable as it was; having been only covered for the momentary reception of O'Lamy; and even this temporary roof was burnt over the head of Peter O'Shaughnessy.

The sun had not yet shone upon the wastes of Connemara, when Major Peter and his army were on their march to evacuate the kingdom altogether;—and hordes of the savage inhabitants closed after his retreat, shouting, dancing, defying, and showing every possible sign of mockery and provocation. But the spirits of the discomfited Major and his party were, with their provisions, wholly exhausted. The lake, the heath, the bog, were repassed with even more alacrity than they were passed; and, in the evening of the second day, Peter and his army arrived fainting, worn, and torn, at Ballycarrigaclunah; the owner of which took pity on the unfortunate invaders, and stretched

forth both the plate and cup of consolation to the fainting military.

This was the first and last attempt, on the part of the troops of the King of Britain, to reduce the wild and independent kingdom of Connemara.

CHAPTER X.

ALTHOUGH Major O'Shaughnessy's expedition had thus ended in the discomfiture desired by King M'Loughlin, still the occupation of the country for two days by the Major, and the consequent flight and unsettlement of O'Lamy and his daughter, necessarily deferred for a time the completion of the monarch's matrimonial scheme. The election was fast approaching—not two days off; and removed from the fascinating object of his sudden affections, the ardour of politics began to dispute the possession of Dick's brain with the ardour of love. He in consequence despatched an epistle to O'Lamy, informing that chieftain of the impossibility of duly celebrating the nuptials previous to the business of the election: he pledged, however,

his royal hand to the daughter of O'Lamy immediately after his success—the contrary being an event Dick was resolved neither to contemplate nor suffer. The mandatory epistle, for it bore that character, ordered O'Lamy, in pursuance of their compact, to despatch a stout hand of his sea-farers, disguised, to Galway town after such an evening. A thousand protestations of affection to the fair Agatha concluded the epistle.

Dick, at the same time, made his other preparations for the electioneering campaign; numbered his voters, directed how often and under what disguises they were to poll successively, and, 'tis said, distributed for the purpose a very vast quantity of shock wigs, that he had caused to be made for the occasion: well-armed parties of his salvage subjects, too, he despatched upon the different roads throughout the rest of the country, resolved that fear and force should effect for him what bribery and corruption was likely to do for his antagonists. To bribes, indeed, Dick scorned to descend, and for some

very good reasons of his own. These preparations all in a state of forwardness, Dick himself, attended by an enormous "tail," made a descent from Connemara on the town and lands of Galway;—for the town itself would not contain the half of them: so they bivouacked around, beneath the shelter of their oak-cudgels; and not a townsman dare shew his face, for fear of them, without the M'Loughlin cockade gracing his felt.

Dick M'Loughlin's entry, which took place at noon, was an imposing one, being not only attended by the innumerable escort aforesaid, but preceded up-street by the identical coffin which our readers remember to have been first introduced to, as containing all that was mortal of the late Lord Manvers. It was surmounted, as it had been when produced at the feast, by a brace of Dick's best duelling-pistols; and every one knew what that emblem was intended to convey, being nothing more than Dick's general answer to all quærists, as to who would succeed?—"The survivor," or, as some narrate, "the sur-

wiwor," was the continued reply. But Dick's, for all this brogue, was not the mouth to liquify his V's in this cockney fashion.

This awful mark of Dick's determination was placed in the committee-room, until it could be displayed upon the hustings; and the order of the day immediately became—to find a tenant for it as speedily as possible. All the candidates, though Galwegians, and consequently pistol-proof, were prudent in retreating from any unnecessary rencontre with the redoubtable Dick; and consequently, the first days were spent in skirmishes between the friends and hangers-on of the parties, trifling in number and consequence—three killed and seven wounded being the little loss felt by society in the two days. All this time was to the sober townsmen a state of plague: shops shut, doors barricaded, and provisions hoisted up by pulleys. The name of M'Loughlin alone resounded through the streets; or, if a solitary cry was heard dissentient, the head lost the power of re-uttering it beneath the weight of a Connemara club.

The important morn at length arrived. Dick

and his coffin both displayed themselves upon the hustings, to the delight and jests of an admiring crowd. Arthur Kelly uttered an awful quantity of bad puns on the subject of Dick and his coffin ; and one, the bad best of the string, gave Dick the temporary surname of *King Undertaker*, which the Connaughtmen, not being able to get an interpreter to translate into Irish, cried down as incomprehensible. Whilst the candidates were employed in canvassing, quarrelling, objecting, and speechifying at one another, and now and then going through similar dialogues to that described as the *Burschen* vocabulary in the delightful tour of Mr. Russell, the real business of the election was going on outside the town, where the barricadoes, preserved by M^cLoughlin's men and O'Lamy's gang, subjected every passer to an interrogatory respecting his principles and friends, which militated very much, certainly, against the laws of free election. Some fellows cried "M^cLoughlin !" went in, and voted otherwise ; but as such regularly passed from the hustings to a souse in the Atlantic, those who ventured became more rare,

and the name of M'Loughlin stood unrivalled at the head of the first day's poll.

The evening, as usual, brought its quarrels and its duels, which, not to disturb the morning sleep of the parties, were fought late at night in the long-room of the principal inn, that served as town-hall, ball-room, grand-jury dinner-room, —in short, the very temple of Galwegian business, festivity, and, as we see, private warfare. The very waiters were so inured to such scenes, that the report of pistols at midnight had the effect of merely lulling their sleep, so customary was the sound. Whilst the gentry were thus elegantly and agreeably engaged, their partizans and followers were in their own way similarly occupied. The Loughrea-men and the Streamstown-boys, with the clans of divers baronies, united for an attack on the entrenchments of the Connemarites. The action commenced about day-break by a general discharge of ponderous stones on either side, till, ammunition being exhausted, the Loughrea warriors charged, club in hand; were at first repelled by the shepherd legion, who thrust their long crooks in their antago-

nist's eyes, or, seizing them by the legs, hauled them to the ground, till at length, having come to close combat, the clubs carried the day before them. A rally was, however, effected by a battalion of mowers, whose scythes did considerable execution on the shins of the attacking party: this, with a well-timed charge in flank, executed by O'Lamy's boys, decided the victory irrevocably in favour of the Connemarites: and the warriors of Loughrea retired, abandoning the cause of their candidates, and carrying off in their coats a world of wounded. Many of them died, they said; but certainly less owing to the innocent wounds inflicted, than to the specific administered both internally and externally in strong doses, which was no other than the best of potheen. One memorable fellow, with a dreadful gash in his leg from the violent contact of a scythe, came in a high state of fever to beg medical relief from the Lady Bountiful of his neighbourhood. The Lady, who loved simple remedies, gave the poor fellow a dose of salts to cool his blood, not doubting but he knew what to do with it. The fellow pounded

it well, for it was precious Glauber, and applied it as a poultice to the wound, to his enormous torture, which he bore heroically, with the idea, that the more pain, the more salutary the nostrum.

While Dick M'Loughlin was thus employed in the serious business of his election, O'Lamy and Agatha had returned to Castle Corrib. The monarch had not, of course, forgotten the interests of his intended father-in-law; and immunity for the past was guaranteed to the smuggler, in return for certain stipulations respecting the future. St. Roque, in the mean time, who had excused himself, and was willingly excused by Dick, from attending the tumult of his election, had grown weary of Ballycarrigaclunah, which, unenlivened by the boisterous glee of its usual crowd, he found to be most doleful quarters. An Irishman even, in his situation, would have complained of the blue devils; what, then, must have been the Frenchman's *ennui*, heightened into uneasiness by his fears respecting Agatha, and doubts of his despotic host's intentions towards her? At

any risk, he resolved on visiting Castle Corrib once more, whither he rightly hoped the O'Lamys had returned ;—and now, during the Connemara monarch's absence, appeared the aptest time for deciding on an ulterior plan with his beloved Agatha.

To Castle Corrib St. Roque proceeded, and was admitted with delight by Shamus, who had been well treated on the banks of the Garonne, and derived from thence a predilection for Frenchmen, very unusual in the larger Britain. For a similar cause the unsuspecting O'Lamy was delighted to see the young Frenchman. Previous, however, to the appearance of St. Roque, he had a very interesting conversation with his daughter, which the hurry of flight, and the business of precaution, had hitherto prevented him from entering upon.

“ Now, my dear Agatha, seriously speaking,” began O'Lamy, “ you have witnessed Mr. M'Loughlin's, (or as he is really, though but jocularly styled so,) King M'Loughlin's devoted attention to you ?”

"Indeed have I, father," replied Agatha, laughing loudly.

"Matrimony's no joke, child."

"No, indeed, good father. But I wonder who is it that would make it so?"

"Not I, for one. Here is a match ready for you, with a man of the first fortune and influence in the kingdom, without whom, moreover, I can't stand, Agatha."

"And who can't stand, it seems, without you!"

"Tut, child! the little help I give him, is nothing, compared with the protection he holds over me. This last affair that your captainship brought on us, is hushed at his word. So argue no farther, my dear Agatha, but prepare yourself to be Mr. McLaughlin's bride."

"Ah! father," said Agatha, "is this the language I have so often heard from you—the first and only I ever heard till now in Castle Corrib?—where you vowed you owed allegiance to no man, and was independent of the world in your own good castle;—when you even talked of joining the French fleet, and—"

“Hist! my good girl—the world was another world ten years ago, and we wild ones might just say what we pleased; it was as like the truth as what daily happened. But those times are over! that old woman, Fortune, has stopped short her wheel,—and on whatever spoke we find ourselves, uppermost or downmost, there we must rest and be contented.”

“Well, father, you’re rich enough, I’m sure; and why not rest as we are?”

“But not secure enough, I tell you, girl:—were we not, but a day ago, obliged to fly?”

“And why did you turn fugitive, at M^cLoughlin’s bidding, before his friends? I would have defended the old walls, had I been you, to the last!”

“Come! my Agatha, you have a spirit above these matters, and do not understand them: leave them to me, and do as I wish you. You have not learned in France, I’m sure, to disobey your parent?”

“I have learned it somewhere, at any rate,” thought Agatha to herself, “for Queen M^cLoughlin will I never be!”

“ That ’s my dear, good girl !” said O’Lamy, interpreting the murmur to meet his wishes.

“ But, father,” cried Agatha, endeavouring a last appeal to the accessible part of the old smuggler’s character, “ he ’s overwhelmed in debt, every-one says.”

“ And what of that, child ? Know ye not that the great stability of power or potentate consists in the weight of his debt : new governments are hopeless, and esteemed beggarly, till they do get completely in debt ; so with M^cLoughlin. Connemara is privileged, moreover ; and such things as creditors, law-summons, and such like, are utterly unknown. For all its bogs, ’tis the finest place in the three kingdoms for an estate : it may be spent three times, and remain to the fore after.”

Thus was O’Lamy expatiating on Dick M^cLoughlin’s power, merits, and the peculiar security of his property, when Shamus ushered in our friend St. Roque, and thus cut short the dialogue. Nothing could be more opportune for the lovers : O’Lamy had completely explained his intentions to his daughter, and had

extorted no promise. Still the old smuggler was not in the least suspicious, and he saw nothing in Agatha's reluctance more than was natural at first in a young maiden's sentiments towards an elderly suitor, even though a monarch. Consequently, after some little courteous conversation with the young Frenchman, in which O'Lamy pressed him to share his hospitality, the smuggler withdrew to see to his craft, and to his bales and hogsheads, stowed away as they had been in divers crypts and lurking-holes.

The lovers, of course, did not lose the opportunity of communicating to each other their mutual fears.

"What a country!" exclaimed St. Roque, "where they shoot one another for sport, plough horses by their tails, and wed maidens against their will; — what cannibals! a sheep every day, and a bullock every week of the consumption of that house; — *eau de vie* flows there like water, and Bourdeaux is as plenty as in the plains of Medoc."

"Thanks to my good father!" cried Agatha.

“ Then what a language ! ask twenty questions, and you get but one answer,—*Annan*, which means *va-t'-en*, I'll engage. And what scenery ! walking the bogs here, one is like a ship in the Bay of Biscay, you sink wherever you step ; and the morass rises, like a wave, on all sides of you, showing but one's head, like a top-gallant-mast, above the reeds. If I had been born here !” cried the Frenchman, “ I should certainly have hanged myself !”

“ Well, that is a compliment,” cried Agatha ; “ would you have me hang myself, who *have* been born here ?”

“ Ay ! in truth, my lovely fair one, would I have you hang yourself around this devoted neck, and let me bear you to our civilized land.”

“ No ! Ernest, I must not desert my poor old father altogether,—that would be neither kind nor prudent. If we could get rid of this monarch's importunities, we might obtain my father's permission.”

“ It will be impossible to resist him,” replied St. Roque, whose idea of Dick's omnipotence

was founded on experience; “and your father is bent on your becoming his.”

“It is but true!” said piteously the young lady; who had, however, long since made her determination.

“Fly then, my fair one, with your Ernest, to the shores of France, where the dominion of these Irish kings extends not. A kind mayor will municipally unite our hands and hearts as firmly as the most revered saint of these wilds. What say you?”

“Not to France, my dear St. Roque,” said Agatha; and she pointed archly from the window of the castle to the north-east,—“there is a nearer way.”

St. Roque was puzzled at first, till he geographically recollected himself, and exclaimed, “*Ah! votre maréchal!*—your blacksmith,—Ecosse, I know,—a thousand blessings on the sweet invention!” And he kissed the lips of the pretty Agatha, to thank her for the thought.

Agatha knew well where one of O’Lamy’s schooners lay manned, and ready for enterprise.

on the Atlantic coast. A few words between the lovers settled the necessary arrangements ; and ere the smuggler chief had tasted his first hour's repose upon that night, his daughter and the gallant captain issued secretly from Castle Corrib, galloped by starlight across the breadth of Connemara to the Atlantic coast,—embarked, sailed, and left O'Lamy rubbing his eyes next morning in the strangest of quandaries, and questioning himself as to whether he was alive or awake.

CHAPTER XI.

MEANTIME the great business of Dick's election sped ;—the rival candidates either shot, intimidated, or out-polled, and the monarch was returned member, to the enjoyment of the desired sacrosanctity of person, and the felicities of a Westminster garret. Other and more selfish men would have preferred the regal life of Ballycarrigaclunah ; but Dick scorned legislation, however despotic, upon so small a scale, and reversed Cæsar's wish in passing the Gallic village ;—he had rather have been last in St. Stephen's, than first in imperial Connemara. Moreover, but for him, how dreadful would be the life of the quadrupeds of Middlesex ! The steeds of his own kingdom were certainly submitted to the cruel punish-

ment of dragging plough and harrow affixed to their tails; but they were Irish horses, used to it, like eels to skinning, and deserved not legislative interference in comparison with the sleek, well-fed, civilized brutes of the sister kingdom. To obtain the power and opportunity of exerting himself in the latter, and averting the sorrow of animal life, the pistols of Dick and his friends might have removed out of the way of care some dozen or a score of the enjoyers of *human* life; but warm Irish hearts never calculate the expense, nor even bring so mean a consideration in comparison with the great end in view.

I cannot think, at this stage of my story, of detaining readers with a description of Dick's success, of his gallantry and coolness in many fatal encounters, and the kind-heartedness, at the same time, that made him revolt against this Galwegian law of destruction;—nor further more can I spare time for describing the chairing of the successful candidate through the streets of Galway, the conclusive feastings and revellings that ensued, the good things that

Arthur Kelly both caused and said, and the amiable ebriety that wound up the scene.

Enough of noisy politics for the present, thought Dick, as he once more turned his horse's head towards Ballycarrigaclunah. The hustings, and all the concomitant thoughts of ambition, vanished from his mind, and in their place the lovely form of Agatha O'Lamy rose to his imagination. From a course of tender musings so inspired, would Dick recur to his late deeds of prowess and recent victory, and straight he likened himself to a conqueror returning from the field to reap the reward of conquest in the bower of beauty:—

“ *None* but the brave,” hummed Dick,

“ *None but* the brave,

None but the *brave* deserve the fair.”

And he martially struck his riding-twigg against his boot.

Arriving late at Ballycarrigaclunah Castle, Mr. M'Loughlin despatched an express to Castle Corrib, notifying his success, return, and his intentions of proceeding thither on the

morrow, to fulfill the solemn part of the stipulation that had been agreed on between the chieftains. The reception of this despatch found O'Lamy relieved from doubt and puzzle on the subject of his daughter's elopement, but still full of resentment;—he had learned the freight that his hitherto faithful schooner had carried, and swore in his own mind never to trust a Frenchman again. What was he to say to king M'Loughlin—how pacify him?

O'Lamy continued in this perturbation, putting to himself the same unanswerable questions, until King M'Loughlin made his appearance upon the morrow, approaching Castle Corrib with a suite, or rather an army, of formidable multitude. Dick was amazed, even irritated, at the silence with which he was received. "Fire and flint!" said Dick, "for what does the fellow keep his old petararoës there pointed against the stars, if not to do honour to a noble guest?" Still no petararo fired, and Shamus appeared to welcome them over the parapet with face long and forlorn enough to tempt the comer to precipitate himself below.

"What's the matter, Shamus?" said the monarch.

"Och, by my soul!" said Shamus, "all the fat is in the fire."

"Not all," said Arthur Kelly; "Shamus, my man, I'm here to the fore."

"Och hone! och hone! Mr. McLoughlin, honey, Miss Agas is gone."

"Gone!" ejaculated the dumb-struck monarch.

"Gone, sure as I'm Shamus, to Dingley-cooch, wid the Frenchman."

"Fire and flint!—the quarry merchant, the captain, the ——"

"Spalpeen! without a collar to his shirt," said Barney, who recollected that suspicious circumstance.

Brian O'Lamy himself now came to corroborate the truth of the story. Dick McLoughlin thrust both his hands into both pockets of his smallclothes, and made a mouth, as though he would whistle,—yet he whistled not. Thus did he walk up stairs, push open the drawing door, went to a buffet in a distant corner of the apartment, took a bottle, deliberately uncorked

it, poured forth about half the contents into a spacious goblet, carried it with a steady hand to his mouth, and swallowed the contents at a draught. This done, he felt his disappointment considerably relieved. Arthur Kelly, who observed the motion of his principal, immediately felt the necessity of relieving a similar disappointment, and he accordingly followed his royal patron's example. M'Loughlin turned his countenance from the company, and from a window gazed out upon the lake. O'Lamy and M'Manus both thought that he wept: they respected, however, the pathetic mood of the monarch, and were still. They were wrong: the fact was, as I have been informed by fishermen who saw Dick's countenance the while, he smiled, and with his hands still in the pockets of his smallclothes, returned thanks for a lucky escape, and mentally resolved never again, old bachelor as he was, to approach the committal of that greatest practical blunder, that, as such, he could commit, viz.—the espousal of a young, French-reared, fighting wife.

Dick, from the time he quitted Galway, till he reached Ballycarrigaclunah, felt his amorous ardour increase considerably: he felt it not abated on the following morning; and, strange and unaccountable to say, it was only on his way to Castle Corrib, to be actually married, as he thought, that the courage and ardour that had hitherto supported him, oozed, like that of Acres on another occasion, through his fingers' ends. The absurdity, the imprudence of the step started to his mind at the time such thoughts generally occur, when, to all probability, they are too late. Fortune, however, had arranged matters more favourably for the king of Connemara; and when Shamus burst forth with the unexpected intelligence, it would be difficult to decide whether the joy or the disappointment of the monarch were greatest. On consideration, if not joy, at least content was the feeling; and although from hurt vanity, his indignation was still alive against his successful rival, even this resentment wanted but a little to be allayed into forgiveness.

That little time, however, was not allowed to it; and the dumb-stricken party had not recovered their feelings of ease and the use of their tongues, when the gallant Captain St. Roque and his bride leaped from their steeds at the portal, were admitted by the wondering Shamus, and made their way boldly into the presence of the angry O'Lamy and the angrier M'Loughlin. Agatha threw herself at the feet of her father, and in humble tones craved forgiveness for obeying her affection in preference to his commands.

"Begone, you worthless wench!" said O'Lamy, "let me never see a sight of your face again!"

While father and daughter were engaged, the one in humble entreaty, and the other in unbending reproach, the ire of M'Loughlin prepared to vent itself on the Frenchman, who, nevertheless, looked nothing dismayed at the monarch's evidently hostile approach.

"So, Mr. Frenchman, a pretty marble quarry you came in search of!"

"He has chosen a very pretty sample, in troth," said Arthur Kelly.

The Frenchman smiled.

“ You smile, do you, youngster?—will you walk on the battlements above, and try those pistols of mine you’ve seen,—perhaps they’ll teach you better manners in a strange land?”

“ Willingly,” said the Frenchman. St. Roque was ready to oblige Dick even in this way; but every one interfered, even O’Lamy, to prevent so serious a mode of deciding the business. The smuggler, now that his daughter was married, did not want to make her a widow so soon, especially by a duel on his own battlements. Still St. Roque was willing, and M’Loughlin enraged at being prevented. The scene was a desperate and a noisy one;—O’Lamy, M’Loughlin, and St. Roque almost in personal struggle with other, and Agatha clinging round her husband; whilst the followers exerted their throats in laying the disturbance, respect preventing them from applying their arms to the case.

It proceeded so far, that blows could not be distant: the monarch and the smuggler both

swore; St. Roque *sacred*, and Agatha prayed. Until at length Dick, placing his grasp on the breast of the French captain, dragged too forcibly for the suture of French tailoring to resist; and the Frenchman's vest, shirt, and cravat rent in the hands of Dick, displaying the warrior's manly breast cloven by many a scar. The scars, however, would in nought have appeased Dick's resentment;—another object did. It was a gold-chain, curiously wrought of massive links and sterling saffron hue, that hung around the neck of Ernest.

Dick McLoughlin fell back from the talismanic chain. “By the powers!—no—it can't be,—let me look again,—it is, by the beard of Boromhe, king Philip's chain, he gave my ancestor, the chain that Deborah stole. Where did you obtain it, young man?”

“My mother gave it me,” replied St. Roque.

“Your mother!—who is she? where is she?”

“She is dead these many years.”

Dick took a pinch of snuff, whether of tender regret, or self-congratulation for a se-

cond escape, I never could discover.—“ Her name?”

“ She assumed that of St. Roque, but was Irish. Her letters and papers, of which I have many with me, prove it. And to her I owe the knowledge of your language, that now enables me to comprehend and converse with you.”

The monarch looked at M^cManus, who looked at the monarch in reply.

“ Where is your kit, your effects?”

“ Here,” quoth St. Roque, wondering whither all this tended; “ at Castle Corrib, whither Monsieur O’Lamy was so good as to invite me. His daughter Agatha I loved long since, in my own country, and to confess the truth, ’twas love for her that tempted me to intrude upon your hospitality.”

“ To that you are welcome, at any rate, young man,” said the pacified monarch, “ but did no other object bring you here to Connemara?—yet, no, he was too young. Let me see those letters of your mother’s—I knew her perhaps—indulge my curiosity.”

“Willingly,” replied the Frenchman.

In a few moments the letters that St. Roque appealed to were in M^cLoughlin’s hands, who turned them over, almost devoured by the fixed gazes of every one in the room,—Agatha, O’Lamy, and St. Roque himself. The monarch was convinced of the truth at once; he put the letters in his pocket, and approaching Agatha, took her by the arm—“You were destined, lassie, to be mine at last—I knew it. Do you know who that pretty fellow is, you made so bold as to marry?”

Agatha stared.

“That pretty fellow, Agatha, and all present need be informed of the secret—is my son! the heir of Clunah. Thank God! the M^cLoughlins are not yet extinct.”

To describe the scene that ensued would be useless: it can be imagined. St. Roque sunk before his parent, who had just defied him to mortal combat. M^cLoughlin embraced, and kissed the lovely Agatha. O’Lamy flung the foraging cap, with which, smuggler-like, he

always covered his baldness, into the lake. M^cManus knocked the fist of one hand against the flat of the other ; and Arthur Kelly demolished a lobster, and washed it down with some suitable liquid, merely to appease his agitation.

My scene is closed, and I have nothing further in store wherewith to treat the reader, except a brief epilogue respecting the future fortunes of their friends, to whom he had been introduced. A happier monarch reigned not henceforward than M^cLoughlin of Connemara. His beloved propensity of legislating for more extensive realms than his paternal ones, he could now indulge without the unpleasant consciousness of altogether deserting his own proper throne, since he left there, as a substitute, the heir of his fortune and name. Great as were his embarrassments, he himself, the frugal inhabitant of a London attic, safe in person, did not heed them ; and O'Lamy's wealth was in store to raise that weight hereafter from his son. So contented was Dick, that he resolved

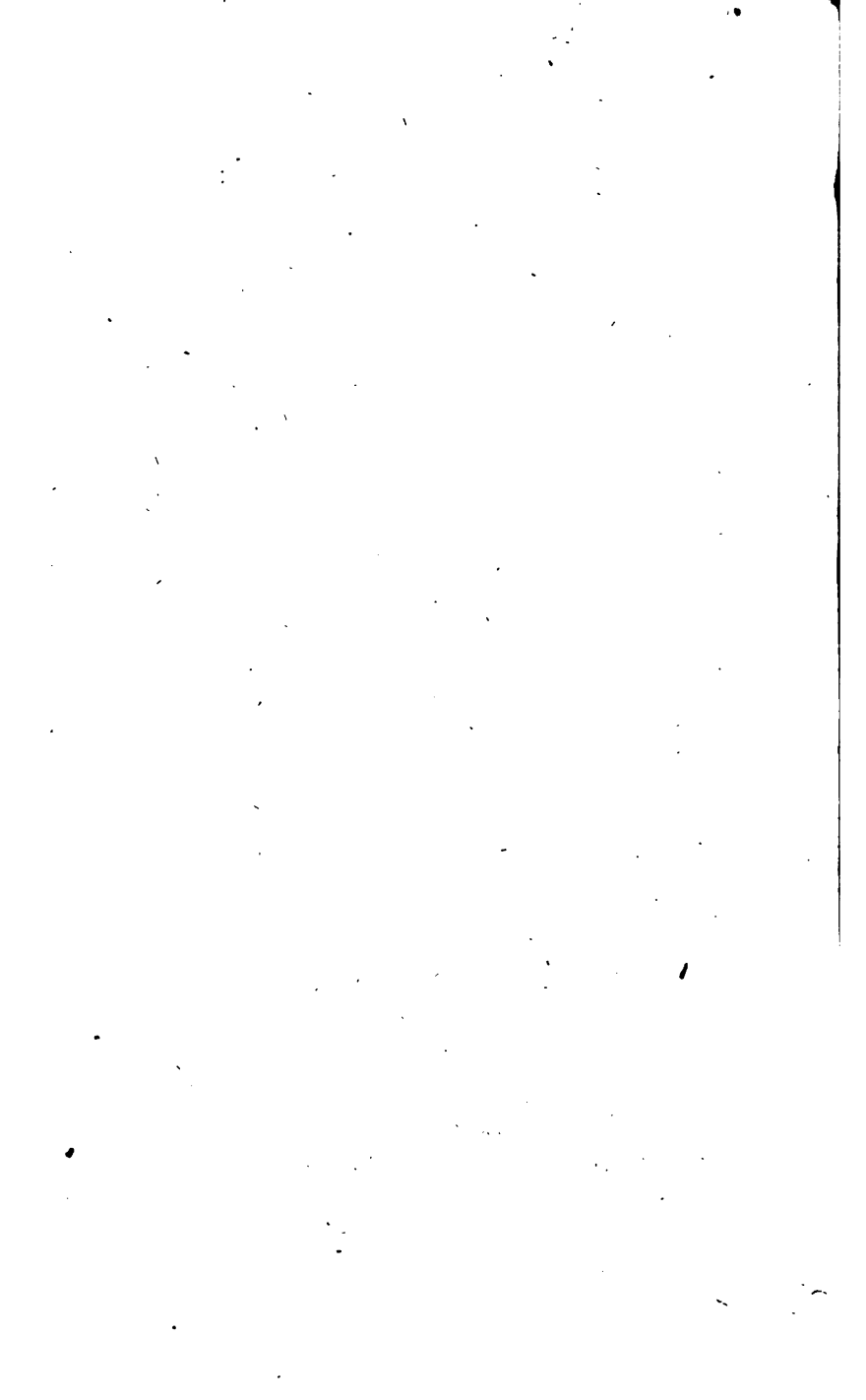
on living peaceably his whole life after ; and that evening his Wogdons were committed to the depths of Lough Corrib in solemn silence—an act characterised by Barney, “ as a mortal pity.” Young M'Loughlin and his bride took possession of Ballycarrigaclunah, and Ernest, although reminded by Agatha of his former asseveration, did not hang himself upon the discovery that he had been born in Connemara. As the Irish blood was in his veins, it is astonishing how fast the Frenchman wore away ; and of the habits of his quondam land he now retains little, not even the memory of his exploits there, if we are to judge for his never speaking of them. As to O'Lamy, his fleet of schooners were, according to stipulation, reduced to one vessel, in which the old man still persists to pay his yearly visit to Bourdeaux, merely for old acquaintance' sake, and for the supply his own and his son's cellar. Poor Arthur Kelly, I am sorry to say, is no more. The *great* and the small alike must die ! and, considering his age and intemperance, the only

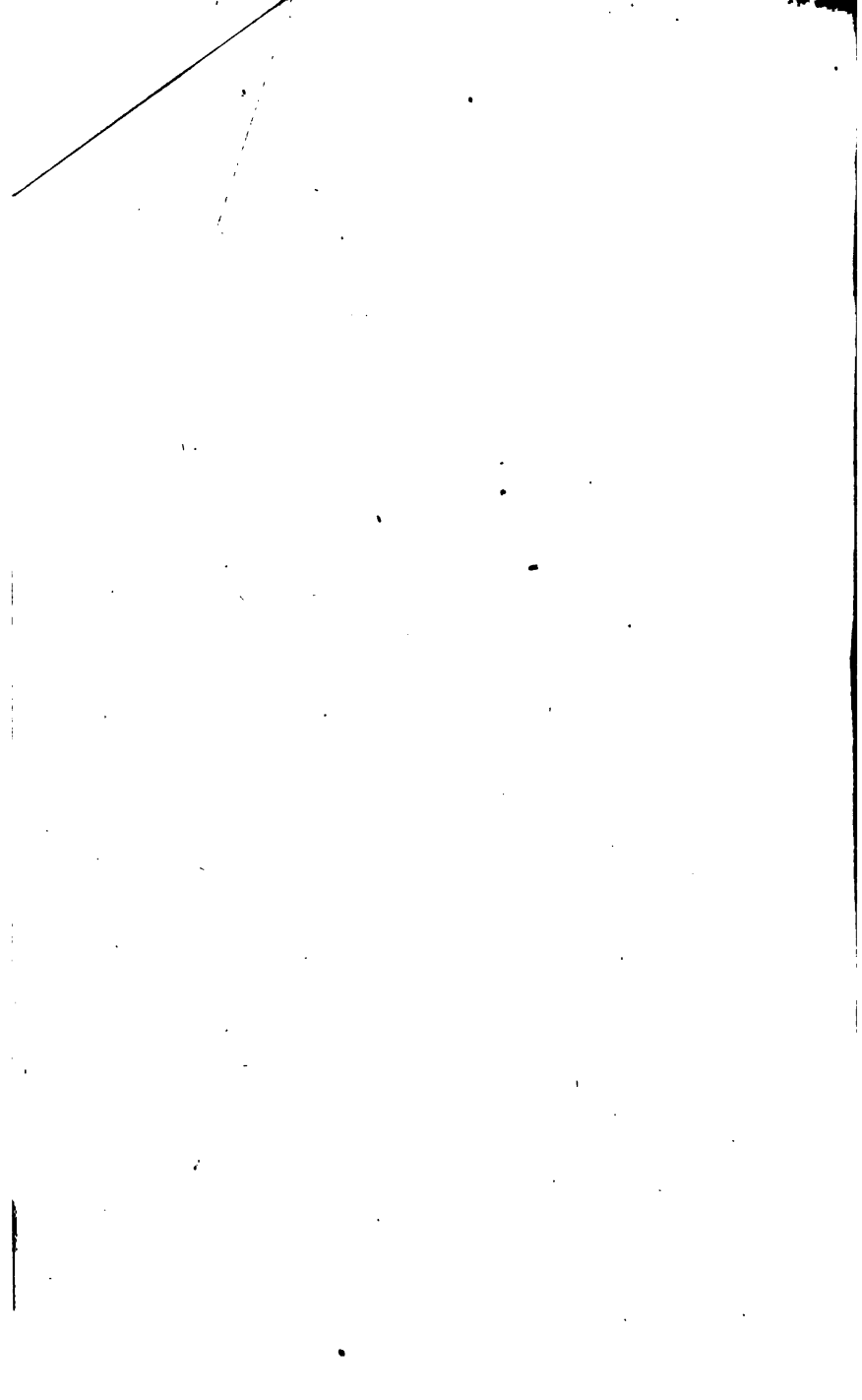
wonder is, how death could so long have spared him. It must be that the skeleton fiend was puzzled to decide in which part of Arthur's enormous portion of mortality he should inflict his spear.

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